The SERIOUS CHRISTIAN:

OR,

Three Great Points

OF

Practical Chriſtianity

I. *The* Great Care of a CHRISTIAN
Or, What is the *Care* of *Heart*, which every Chriſtian ſhould uſe, for the *Keeping of his Heart?*

II. *The* Faithful STEWARD:
Or, What are our *Talents*, and what the *Methods*, by which we may come to give a *Good Account* of our *Talents?*

III. SACRED ARCHERY:
Or, What may be ſaid, for the Direction and Incouragement of thoſe *Prayers*, which we call *Ejaculatory?*

In Three Brief Diſcourſes.

By an AMERICAN.

Vade, Liber, quanquam ſis parvus mole
ſed Amplum
Lectori Fructum det Deus { *Omnividens,* *Omnipotens.*

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The Epiſtle to the Reader.

READER,

IF *thou ask concerning theſe Treatiſes, as* Iſaiah *concerning* Merodach Baladan's *Meſſengers*; What ſay they, and from whence come they unto thee? *I muſt anſwer as* Hezekiah; They are come from a far Countrey! [*Iſai.* 39. 3.] *Adding thus much as unto what they ſay; if thou wilt thy ſelf conſult them, thou ſhalt do as I have done:* Bear them witneſs, and wonder at the gracious words which proceed out of their mouthes. [*Luke* 4. 22.]

Their Author, *who needs not other Praiſe than his* Works *do load him with, is not much beyond the* Age at which *David* began to Reign, [2 *Sam.* 5. 4.] *But, long he hath been at Years of Heavenly Diſcretion: And,* Becauſe Wiſe, he hath ſtill taught the beſt Knowledge. Good heed hath he given, and Wrote and ſet forth more than *Sixty ſuch Books: In nothing ſmall, ſave their Bulk. No one of them have I ſeen, whoſe* Subject *hath not been very Momentous, and it's* Management *truly Judicious. Whoſe* Language *alſo hath not been Elegant and Perſpicuous, fit to Convince the Strongeſt, and to Inſtruct the Weakeſt Reader. Some think this Condeſcenſion to the Weak to be Folly. If ſo it be, it is a Godly, and therefore a Glorious one. Becauſe,* It pleaſeth God, by the Fooliſhneſs of Preaching, to Save them that believe. [1 *Cor.* 1. 21.] *And it is an unknown Loſs, that Chriſtianity ſuffers, by the* Pride *which keeps too many from* becoming ſuch Fools to make many Wiſe!

Such another Preacher as this, was Dr. Henry Langley, *in his like early Years, in which he was ſo Beloved and Admired by Arch-biſhop* Uſher, *who was then at* Oxford; *that he (ſo competent a Judge of Preachers) ſtuck not to ſay*; He marvelled, that the great Doctors did not all of 'em go, and learn of Mr. *Langley* to Preach. *This great Effate I would apply, if I feared not* doing Violence *to my Humble Friend's Modeſty. As alſo,* giving Occaſion *for Surmiſes, that the Honour he hath done my Hand, had Tranſported it beyond juſt bounds.*

Reader, *Spill not on the Ground ſuch Sermons as theſe, as* David *did* Bethlem-*Well-water. They will from the Ground cry againſt thee as* Abel's *Blood againſt* Cain.

Cheat not thy ſelf, as the manner of ſome is, with only Praiſing, *and not* Practiſing *Goſpel Truths: They are certain* Death, *where they are not* Spirit *and* Life. *Hearers and Readers, who are not truly* Cleanſed, *are inevitably* Curſed.

The Heathen Moraliſt's Words deſerve thy Thoughts: * He is not as yet a Wiſe man, who hath gotten ever ſo perfectly the beſt Notions, unleſs his Mind and Soul become New-formed, and Faſhioned by them. *But, I commit thee to Mr.* Cotton Mather, *with the Words of the Angel unto* Cornelius, *concerning* Peter; He ſhall tell thee what thou oughteſt to do! [*Acts*, 10. 6.]

* Scientiam qi didicit, --- nondum Sapiens eſt, niſi in ea qæ didicit Transfiguratus eſt Animus. Senec. Epiſt. 94.

Daniel Burgeſs.

THE

THE Great Care OF A CHRISTIAN:

Or, *What is the* Care of Heart, *which every Chriſtian ſhould uſe for the* Keeping *of his* Heart?

PROV. xiv. xxiij.

Keep thy Heart, with all Diligence; for out of it are the Iſſues of Life.

IT is a true *Anatomy* of Man, which is reported unto us, in the Hiſtory of his Firſt *Creation*; Gen. 2. 7. *The Lord formed Man out of the Duſt of the Ground, and Breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living*

Soul. The *Body* of Man is but a *Cabinet*, in which there is lodged a *Jewel*, thus to be deſcribed; *A ſpiritual and immortal Subſtance, endued with the Faculties of Knowing and Willing, and Affecting to be united unto an Human Body.* This Noble Thing, the *Soul* of Man, is called, the *Heart* of Man, ſome Hundreds of times in the Oracles of God; partly, becauſe the *Soul* is like the *Heart* covered within us from external ſight; and partly, becauſe the *Soul* much diſcovers and expreſſes it ſelf by the motions of the *Heart*.

To Defend and Befriend this *Heart* of Man, the whole *Word* of God is written; and particularly, that Counſel in the *Word* of God, which has now been Read. It has been ſometimes a ſaying, *Let him that would be Holy, read the Pſalms of* David, *and let him that would be Wiſe, read the Proverbs of* Solomon. But both *David* and *Solomon* ſeem to be met, in the Words now before us. We have in our Con-text, *Solomon* the Son, reciting the Catechiſm, which in his Child-hood, he had Learn'd from *David* his Father.

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The Admonitions of *David* unto *Solomon*, ſome cut off at the Tenth Verſe; but others apprehend and underſtand them to be continued unto the End of the Chapter.

You that are *Godly Parents*, will give *Godly Leſſons* unto your *Children*, behold as important an Inſtruction as can poſſibly be ſtudied by *Parents*, or *Children*: *Keep thy Heart.*

I remember 'tis reported of *Solomon*, in *Eccl.* 12. 10. that he wrote *Acceptable Words*, and he wrote *Words of Truth*. Probably, his *Verba Delectabilia* there, may mean his *Canticles*, and his *Verba Fidelia* may mean his *Proverbs*.

Chriſtians, Behold, *A Word of Truth* now ſet before you. The *Doctrine* of it is briefly this.

The Iſſues of Life proceeding thereof, lay upon men an exceeding Obligation unto the keeping of their own Hearts with an exceeding Diligence.

In our Text there lyes theſe Things before us.

Firſt;

First; We have a moſt neceſſary and indiſpenſable *Duty* urg'd upon us. Our Duty is, *To keep our Hearts.* 'Tis conceived by ſome Interpreters, That this Command alludes to the Circumſtances of a *Beſieged Garriſon*, for the *keeping* whereof Souldiers do Watch and Ward: So that, a *well-garriſon'd Soul*, is what we are adviſed unto.

The *Heart* of Man is conſidered under a Two-fold Notion. We read in *Heb.* 3. 12. concerning, *An Evil Heart.* And we read in 1 *Kings* 15. 14. concerning *A Perfect Heart.* Accordingly, there is a Two-fold *keeping* to be beſtowed upon our Heart. Firſt, *Keep thy Heart*; that is, *Confine thy evil Heart.* Or, *keep* thy *Heart* from diſpleaſing of God, and from deſtroying of thy ſelf, as it will certainly do, if thou *keep* it not. Our Heart, as diſorder'd by Original Sin, has theſe two Properties; it is *Untruſty*; we are told, *The Heart is Deceitful above all things*: And it is *Unruly*; we are told, *It is a Revolting and a Rebellious Heart.* Now, ſuch an *Heart* ſhould be *kept* from Cheating, from Spoiling, from Confounding of

us.

us. The ſame word, that is in our Text, we have in *Gen.* 40. 3. *He put them in Ward, into the Priſon.* Thus a man ſhould after a ſort *Impriſon* his own ſinful *Heart*, and reſtrain it from it's Inordinances. Again; *Keep thy Heart*; that is, *Defend thy perfect Heart.* Or, *keep* thy Heart in ſuch a Temper, as it may be by Sincerity diſpos'd unto; and *keep* up a good Order in it, when once 'tis come to ſuch an Order. Our Heart, when Renewed by the Grace of God, has thoſe two Properties. There is *Purity* in it; ſo we are told, *Bleſſed are the Pure in Heart:* And there is *Loyalty* in it; ſo we are told, *God is to be ſought with the whole Heart.* Now, our Heart, when 'tis thus Reformed, is to be *kept* from ſuch filthy Impreſſions of Sin, as may hinder it's being *wholly* for the Intereſt of God. The ſame word, that is in our Text, we have in *Ezekiel*, 44. 16. *They ſhall enter into my Sanctuary, and they ſhall keep my Charge.* Thus a man ſhould look after his *Heart*, as the Prieſts were to look after the *Sanctuary*; look after it, that nothing be Polluted, that all things be Regular in it.

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In Short; We are to keep our Hearts by juſt Endeavours, that ſpiritual and eternal Plagues, may not come upon our Souls. *Keep thy Heart*; that is, be careful that thy Soul may not be *Deſtroyed* hereafter. There is a ſad Account in *Mark* 8. 36. of a Man, that *Loſeth his own Soul.* The *Heart* is not *kept*, when the *Soul* is *loſt*, in *everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord.* *Keep* thy *Soul*, from the Jaws of the *Second Death*; *keep* thy *Soul* from the ever-gnawing *Worm*, and the ever-burning *Fire*; *keep* thy *Soul*, from the intollerable and interminable *Perdition of ungodly men.* Moreover, *Keep thy Heart*; that is, be careful that thy Soul may not be *Diſtempered* here. We are ſo Counſelled, in *Luke* 21. 19. *In your Patience poſſeſs ye your Souls.* The *Heart* is not *kept*, when by letting in any *Diſorder*, a man lets go the *poſſeſſion* of his own *Soul.* *Keep* thy *Soul* from ever being put out of it's due Frame, or it's true Light; *keep* thy ſelf always, *Compos Animi*, in the right uſe of thy Soul. *Keep* thy *Soul* ever more in that *Fear*, and that *Faith*, and the Exer-

ciſe

ciſe of thoſe gracious Principles, by which it ſhould be compoſed.

Here is our Duty.

Secondly. We have the *Manner* wherein this Duty is to be performed. *With all Diligence.* This is one of thoſe *Precepts*, which thou, O Lord, haſt *Commanded us to keep diligently.* 'Tis what we find inculcated, in *Deut.* 4. 9. *Keep thy own Soul Diligently.* Our Text may be rendred, *keep thy Heart with all keeping* ; yea, and *above all keeping.* Firſt, *Keep thy Heart with all Diligence* ; that is, whatever means of *keeping the heart* there are, do thou ply them all. As 'tis ſaid, about the *keeper* of God's *Iſrael*, in *Pſal.* 121. 4. *Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael, ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep :* So may it in a meaſure be ſaid about the *keeper* of his own *heart. Behold, he that keepeth his own heart, will always be watching, and always be working about it.* Such a man, will follow all the Directions of Heaven, to *keep* his *heart* out of Harm's way ; all the *Obſervation*, all the *Meditation*, all the *Supplication* by which the *Preſervation* of the Heart may be aſſiſted. Furthermore, *Keep thy heart with*

with all Diligence ; that is, be more ſollicitous about *keeping the heart* than any thing elſe in the world. Oh! no *keeping* is to be ſo Exact, ſo Vigilant, ſo Sedulous! There is the *keeping* of the *Goaler*, [*Acts*, 12. 4.] But *keep* thy *Heart* above that *keeping*. Have thine *Eye* always upon thy *Heart*, leſt it ſlip away from under thy Government. There is the *keeping* of the *Watchman*. [2 *Kings*, 11. 5.] But *keep* thy *heart* above that *keeping*. Be always minding of, and walking in, every Corner of thy *Heart*, leſt any Miſchief happen in it. There is the *keeping* of the *Owner*. [*Eccl.* 5. 13.] Well; *keep* thy *heart* above that *keeping*. Be more Thoughtful how to *keep* thy *Heart*, than how to keep thy *Houſe*, thy *Land*, thy *Friend*, thy *Name*, or thy *Liberty*. Oh! let no *Jewel* be kept ſo ſtrictly as thy *Heart* ! This is the *All Diligence*, which the *Heart* is to be *kept* withall.

Thirdly. We have the *Motive* whereon this Duty is to be attended. *For out of it are the Iſſues of Life*. The *Heart* ſeems reſembled unto a *Fountain* ; which if it be not well-*kept*, *Poiſon* may be thrown into

into it, from whence *Iſſue* the Streams of Death, unto all that partake thereof. The *Heart* is a *Fountain of Life*, in a *Natural Senſe*. There is mention in *Eccl.* 12. 6. about, *The Pitcher at the Fountain.* In little more than the Twentieth part of an Hour, the whole Maſs of Blood circulates thro' the Heart; from the Right-Cavity of the Heart, it paſſes thro' the *Arterious Vein*, the Branches whereof being diſperſed thro' the *Lungs*, and joyned unto the Branches of the *Veiny Artery*, by that it paſſes from the *Lungs* unto the left ſide of the Heart, and thence it flows into the *Great Artery*, the Branches of which are ſpread thro' all the Body, and theſe being united unto thoſe of the *Hollow Vein*, 'tis thereby carryed back into the *Right Ventricle* of the Heart: So the Blood is Perfected, Purified, Elaborated; and from the *Heart* with the *Lungs* thus keeping alive the Flame of Life, the *Iſſues of Life* go forth to all the Body: But, the *heart* is a *Fountain of Life* in a *Myſtical Senſe* alſo. *Out of it are the Iſſues of Life:* As much as to ſay, Firſt, Thou art a *Dead Man*, if thou haſt not a *kept heart*. A

Wound in the *heart* is uſually a *Mortal* Wound. It's ſaid, about an *un-kept heart* in *Mat.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceed the Things which Defile a Man.* Even ſo, *Out of ſuch an heart proceed thoſe things which undo a Man.* If a Man *keep* not his *heart*, the *World* will enſnare his Heart, the *Devil* will enſlave his Heart, Hell will get his Heart for ever. The Man that is not an *Heart-keeper*, is a *Self-deſtroyer*. The Man ſaid unto the Prophet, in 1 *Kings*, 20. 39. *Keep this Man*; *if he be miſſing*, *thy Life ſhall go for his Life.* So does the Lord ſay unto us about our Hearts, *Keep it*, *or thy Life ſhall go for it.* On the other ſide, Secondly, The *keeping* of thy *Heart*, will prove the *keeping* of thy *Life*. About a *kept Heart*, We may affirm, as our Saviour, about a *Good Heart*, in *Mat.* 12. 35. *It brings forth Good Things.* There are many *Good Things* which *Iſſue* from ſuch an *Heart* as This. There are Four *Iſſues of Life* the Body Receives from the Heart; *Senſe*, and *Health*, and *Growth*, and *Motion*. Analogous hereunto, will theſe Benefits Iſſue from *Well-kept Hearts* unto our Souls. Wouldeſt thou have a *Senſible* Soul? A

Soul

Soul that ſhall *ſee Him that is inviſible*, and *hear the Voice of God*, and *taſte that the Lord is gracious?* Or, wouldſt thou have an *Healthful* Soul? A Soul free from that *Blindneſs*, and that *Hardneſs*, and thoſe Canine *Appetites*, which are worſe than the *Diſeaſes of Egypt?* Or, wouldeſt thou have a *Growing* Soul? A Soul that ſhall *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and receive *Nouriſhment* from all the Ordinances and Providences of God? Or, Finally, wouldeſt thou have an *Active* Soul? A Soul, that ſhall be lively and valiant in the Service of God; and that ſhall *Run, and not be weary*, in the Chriſtian Race? Oh! *keep* thy *Heart*, and thou ſhalt have All of this. Theſe are the *Iſſues of Life*.

There is now a General, and a moſt Important *CASE*, which we have every one of us, occaſion to think upon.

What is the Care of Heart, that every Man ſhould uſe for the Keeping of his Heart?

Now, in the Handling of this CASE, there are *Three Steps*, wherewith we would gradually Ariſe unto the Top of our Diſcourſe.

I. Let no man *loſe* his own Heart, or, throw his own *Soul* away. When the great God ſayes, *Keep thy Heart with all Diligence*: Let not any man, *Loſe his own Soul by all Wickedneſs*. 'Tis the Impiety of ungodly men, they are *Prodigæ Gens Animi*. They fling away their own Souls, at a rate, how Prodigal, how Deſperate, how infinitely Fooliſh! *Reaſonable Souls*, alas, they are the moſt *Unreaſonably* dealt with, of all the things under the Sun! But, what way do men take, to Throw away their own *Souls*? Truly, this one Comprehenſive way; They *Sleight* their *Souls*, and ſo they *loſe* them.

There is a Two-fold Requeſt, which I have to make unto my Neighbours; and ſince 'tis for your *Souls* that I make it, Oh! Hearken to me!

Firſt. Be not thoſe *Fools*, who count any Cares too much for the ſaving and ſerving

ſerving of their *Souls*? Man, thy Soul is Periſhing in the howling, fiery *Pits* of *Sin*; there, thence thy Soul Groans, and Cries, and Begs unto thee, as *Joſeph* in the *Pit* of old; it Cries from the *Horrible Pit*, *Oh! Do what thou canſt to get me hence!* Do not now careleſly, and ſcornfully leave thy Soul in the Diſtreſſes of it. The Servant of the *Syrian* pleaded, in 2 *Kings*, 5. 13. *My Father, If the Prophet had bid thee do ſome great Thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he ſaith to thee, Waſh, and be thou Clean?* Thus may it be ſaid, My Friend, The Salvation of thy *Soul*, whole Rivers of *Oyl*, whole Mountains of *Gold*, would not be too much to Purchaſe it: A man would not think much to Swim thro' an Ocean of ardent Brimſtone, or of running Bell-mettal, for the *Salvation* of his never-dying Soul. But the Lord only ſaith, *Believe* and *Repent!* And wilt thou ſay, *This is too much*; *my Soul ſhall periſh firſt!* Indeed, *Judas* once Grudged all the Reſpect that was paid unto the *Saviour* of Souls; he ſaid in *Mat.* 26. 8. *To what*

purpoſe is this Waſte? But, Oh! let no man here ſay ſo about the Cures that are Needful for the *Salvation* of his own Soul; *To what Purpoſe, is all this Praying, all this Hearing, all this Thinking about my Soul? It is Waſte, it will not quit the Coſt.* Our compliance with the Calls of the Goſpel, would fetch up our Souls from the *belly of Hell*, to Live, and Joy, and praiſe, among the Angels of God for ever. Oh! be not now deaf to theſe Calls: Let no man come under that black Deſcription, in *Prov.* 15. 32. *A Refuſer of Inſtruction*, and ſo, *A Deſpiſer of his own Soul.*

Secondly. Be not thoſe *Fools*, who will upon the ſilly, ſorry, little offers of Sin, part with their own *Souls*. Don't forego a *Soul* for a *Song*. The Enemies of our *Souls*, are continually Bartering with us for our *Souls*. Now, do not fondly Truck away a *Soul* for a Trifle, for a Nothing. Wretched *Eſau* ſold his *Birth-Right* for a *Break-Faſt*; and it is ſaid, in *Gen.* 35. 34. *Thus Eſau deſpiſed his Birth-Right.* Let none of us make ſuch woful Bargains about our Souls. Do not

not for the ſake of a few *Pleaſures*, which are *but for a ſeaſon*, plunge thy *Soul* into that State, from whence the *Smoke of the Torment ſhall aſcend for ever and ever.* Do not, for the vain *Riches* of this World, caſt a *Soul* into that State where they are *hardly Beſtead, and Hungry, and they fret themſelves and Curſe* GOD. Do not, for the falſe *Honours* of this World, caſt a *Soul* into that State, where they lye under *Shame and everlaſting Contempt.* When our Lord was Betray'd for a Vile Sum of Money, He ſaid in *Zech.* 11. 13. *A goodly Price was I valued at, of them!* Thus may it be ſaid, when a *Soul* is pawned for a *Sin.* The *Soul* of a *Drunkard* may ſay, *Thou doſt not value me, ſo much as a Cup of Drink!* The *Soul* of the *Cheater*, may ſay, *Thou doſt not value me ſo much as a Bitt of Money!* The *Soul* of a fool-hardy *Swearer*, values the bold Sound of a Big Word, above the Weal of his own *Soul.* *A goodly Price is it valued at!* If a man live in any *known Sin*, it will coſt him no leſs than the Life of his own *Soul.* It is ſaid in 1. *Sam.* 15. 23. *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witch-*

Witch-craft. The man that lives in any *Rebellion* againſt God, he does implicitly *Sell* his own Soul to the Divel!

But let me a little Expoſtulate with ſuch as are inclined unto this *Madneſs*. What is it, Sinners, what is it, that you are thus ready to *Throw away?* O think again: 'Tis thy *Soul*, poor Man, 'tis thy *Soul!* Surely a *Soul*, 'tis worth any man's *Keeping*, it is too good, and too great a Thing to be thrown away. *Behold, O Deſpiſer* of thy own *Soul*: That *Soul*, which thou throweſt away, 'tis the *Miracle* of the *Creation*; the whole inferiour World cannot ſhow another Creature ſo Adorned, ſo Endowed, as that *Soul* of thine. That *Soul*, which thou throweſt away, the Almighty Son of God Himſelf, reckoned not His own Blood, a Price too high to lay down for the Ranſome of it. All Heaven, every corner of Heaven, would Ring with ſhouts of Joy, to ſee the Grace of God in that *Soul* of thine. The Angels of Heaven, the brighteſt and higheſt *Angel* in Heaven, would count it his Honour to do a kind Office for that *Soul*

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of thine. That *Soul*, that under-valued *Soul*, it is a Being made for *Eternity*. Oh! 'tis Pitty, 'tis Ten Thouſand Pitties, that ſo Rare a Thing ſhould be thrown away! 'Tis taken for granted, in *Eph.* 5. 29. *No man* (in his right Wits) *ever yet hated his own Fleſh*. Oh! let it then be ſo, *No Man here doth caſt away his own Spirit*.

II. Let every man be Sollicitous to *get* his own Heart, that he may *keep* it: Or, Let us be Concerned, that our *Souls* may be *Recovered* out of that *loſt* Condition, which by Sin they are fallen into. How can we *keep* our own Souls, till they be Reſcued from the horrid Hands, which *keep* them, and *hold* them, in the *Chains of Darkneſs*?

Let it be Conſidered, *Firſt*; That every Unregenerate Man hath a *loſt Soul* within him. The Father of the Prodigal ſaid of him, *My Son was Dead, and was Loſt!* And, This may the Unregenerate Man ſay of himſelf, *My Soul is Dead, and is loſt*. The Apoſtle could ſay, in 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *If our Goſpel be hid,*

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it is hid unto them that are Loſt. In like manner it may be ſaid, *If Sin be followed, it is followed by them that are loſt*; and *If Chriſt be neglected, he is neglected by them that are loſt.* Now, this is the unhappineſs of all the Unregenerate; Their *Souls* are *loſt*, in as much as their Souls are fallen into the Hands of Enemies, of Deſtroyers. The *Soul* of an Unregenerate Man, 'tis a Captive unto the *Juſtice* of God; it is in dreadful Bonds, to become a *Sacrifice* for the Satisfaction and Vindication of that holy Juſtice. And the *Soul* of an Unregenerate Man, 'tis a Captive unto the *Power* of Sin; it's in the *Bond of Iniquity*, and *Sin* is a ſort of a *Priſon*, wherein 'tis Locked up, *ſhut up in Unbelief.* And the *Soul* of an Unregenerate Man, is a Captive unto the *Malice* of Satan; it is *Led Captive by Satan at his Will*, and the black Fetters of Hell, do lay lamentable Reſtraints upon it. Oh! Conſider what the direful *Keepers* of thy Heart, at preſent are! Until thy *Heart*, thy *Soul*, be ſet at ſome Freedom from theſe *Keepers*, how

how canſt thou do any thing thy ſelf to any purpoſe for the *keeping* it?

Let it be Conſidered, *Secondly*. That the *loſt Soul* of an Unregenerate Man, may be *Recovered*: Thanks be to God, it is *poſſible*, it is *poſſible!* Oh! the *loſs* of thy *Soul*, is not yet gone ſo far, but that thy *Soul* may yet be re-gained, the *loſs* may yet be retrieved. There is not one Unregenerate Man among us, but as the Prophet ſaid, *It may be, ye ſhall be hid*: Or, as the Prophet ſaid, *Who can tell but God may turn away from his fierce Anger?* So, it may be ſaid about the *Soul* of that Man; *It may be that Soul ſhall be ſaved*; *Who can tell but it may be ſo?* The Soul of the Unregenerate Man, is a *Priſoner*; but, Oh! poor *Soul*, thou art a *Priſoner of Hope*. There is this Ground of *Hope*, for the *Soul* of an Unregenerate Man; There is a *Redeemer*, with a glorious *Redemption*, propoſed and profered, in the Word of God unto him: Loſt *Soul*, The *mighty Redeemer* of Souls is willing to be thine. This was the Buſineſs, which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt came into the World upon,

Luc.

Luc. 19. 10. *He came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* There is a *Redeemer*, who has paid a full *Ranſom* for *loſt Souls*; there is a *Redeemer*, who by a ſtrong Hand fetches away *loſt Souls*, from the Land of their Captivity. And I have a Commiſſion from this Redeemer, to Declare and Proclaim, There is not ſo much as one *loſt Soul* among all, but what is Invited unto an Intereſt in Him.

Let it be Conſidered, *Thirdly*. That the *Opportunities* for the *loſt Soul* of an Unregenerate Man to be *Recovered*, are but *ſhort* Opportunities. As *Michael* ſaid unto *David*, *Save thy ſelf to Night, for to Morrow thou mayſt be ſlain.* So, if any of you put off your Thoughts about the Recovery of your *loſt Souls*, until *To Morrow*, I ſay, *If thy ſoul be not this Night Recovered, it may to Morrow be Irrecoverable.* The Time of *Life*, is but *ſhort*, and it is uncertain, how *ſhort*. But thy Opportunities for thy *Soul*, can be at furtheſt, no longer than thy *Life*. It was the Song of *Hezekiah*, in *Iſa.* 38. 17, 18. *Thou haſt recovered my ſoul; but they that*

go

go down into the Pit, cannot hope for thy Truth. If once thy *Body* come to lye Rotting in the *Pit* of the Grave, If once thy *Spirit* come to lye Roaring in the *Pit* of Hell, thy *Loſt Soul*, is then a *Gone Soul*; there will be no *Hope* of its Recovery. *Then!* The *Redemption of the Soul, it ceaſeth for Ever!*

Awakened by theſe things, Let every Unregenerate Man, become Reſtleſs until he has Experienced a Work of *Regeneration* upon his own *Soul.* When the Soul becomes *Regenerate*, then it is *Recovered.* The Actual *Recovery* of the *Soul*, its Recovery from the Wretched Circumſtances of Sin, is actually Commenced, and Enſured, in the *Regeneration* of it.

But, What may an *Unregenerate* Man do, towards the *Recovery* of his own Soul? Truly, ſuch a Man is utterly Unable to *Do*, or to *Will*, any thing *ſpiritually Good*; and it is not likely, that he ſhould ever be *Recovered*, until he ſee this Inability. Such a *Death* is by *Sin*, come upon all the *Faculties* of our *Souls!* The *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Herely, of

the Natural Man's *Free-Will* to *Spiritual Good*, has a tendency to confirm a *Loſt Soul* in its *Loſt Eſtate* for Ever. Thoſe unhappy Miniſters, who are depraved with Opinions which are ſo derogatory to the Sovereign *Grace* of Heaven, are like to entail an Eternal *Blaſt* upon their Miniſtry. What can an *Unregenerate* Man do, till *Drawn* by the *Father* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Alas! No *Unregenerate* Man, can ſo much as *diſpoſe* and *prepare* himſelf ſo far for his own *Regeneration*, that God ſhould be bound in any wiſe to beſtow it on him. When an *Unregenerate* Man, has done all that he can, in the Improvement of his *Natural Abilities*, he muſt own, as in *Rom.* 9. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth Mercy*: The Sovereign God has not by any Promiſe, obliged Himſelf unto an *Unregenerate* Man, to beſtow the *Firſt Grace* upon him. There is not any one Promiſe of *Grace* in all the Goſpel, which any *Unregenerate* Man, has any Qualification in him, to Entitle him unto. Find me ſuch a *Promiſe*,

or

or a *Promiſe* made unto any Soul not United unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, if you can. Oh! Be humbled, in the Senſe of thy own wretched *Impotency!*

Nevertheleſs, 'Tis many ways Advantageous, for an *Unregenerate* Man, to Do as much as he *can*, tho' that *much* be *Little*, be *Nothing*, in point of Infallible Conſequence, for the *Recovery* of his own Soul. If he *do* what he *can*, there is a probability that God intends to help him, ſo that he ſhall *do* more than he *can*. This he may be ſure of; if he make his *Impotency* a Cloak for his *Obſtinacy*, it will Aggravate his Condemnation at the Laſt.

Say then; Thou miſerable *Unregenerate*. Firſt, Canſt thou not avoid the *Society* of *Loſt Souls*? An *Hater* of Holineſs, a *Scoffer* of Godlineſs, thou may'ſt refuſe to be *Companion of ſuch a Fool*.

Again; Canſt thou not, after ſome ſort, Hear the *Word*, which Renews *Loſt Souls*? We are *Born again by the Word of God*; and ſo, we are *Found again by the Word of God*; and it is as eaſy to go unto a *Sermon*, as to go unto a *Tavern*.

Once more; Canſt thou not, after ſome ſort, ſeek ~~your~~ unto God, who pitties *Loſt Souls*. When it could be ſaid unto an Ill Man, *Thy Heart is not Right*, it was added, *pray to God*: Thus, if it may be ſaid, *Thy Heart is Loſt*, What ſhould follow but this, *pray to God?* Oh, fall down upon thy Knees before the Lord, and ſay, *I beſeech thee, O Lord, to deliver my Soul!*

Finally, Can't you *Try* what you can *Do? Try*, as the Man with a *Withered Hand*, when commanded ſo to do, made a *Trial*, whether he could not ſtretch it out. Thus, the conſent of your Souls, to be Recovered in the way of the *New-Covenant*, is called for; *Try* whether you can't give that Conſent; if you *can*, 'tis done! *Try* whether you can't Accept the *Spirit* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is tendered unto you, for the *Recovery* of your Souls: *Try* whether the *Spirit* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will not enable you to Rely upon His *Righteouſneſs*, which is provided for your *Souls*; and whether the *Spirit* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will not enable you

then

then to Love Him, ſerve Him, and Praiſe Him with all your *Souls*? Who knows, but a *Recovered Soul*, may follow hereupon!

III. Let every Man be ſollicitous to *keep* his own Heart, when he has *got* it: Or, Let us be concerned, that our *Souls* may be preſerved from thoſe *deadly* Evils, whereto they are Obnoxious in, and from this *preſent evil World*. If our *Souls* have, in any Meaſure, been Rectified; by the *Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Let us *keep* them from every Thing that may be contrary to the Bleſſedneſs of Renovation.

It ſhould be conſidered, Firſt, That the *danger* of our *Hearts*, is not Inconſiderable. *Danger* is the cauſe of *Keeping*. Know it then, That there are buſy, and crafty *Tempters*, continually beleaguring of our *Hearts*. It allarmed the Champion of Old, when it was cry'd unto him, *The Philiſtines are upon thee, O Sampſon*. I muſt give you that Notice, *The Philiſtines of Hell are upon thee, O Soul*. When the God of Heaven is on the one hand; urging of us, *Give me*

thy Heart, the World, and the Devil are on the other hand, asking, with an Helliſh Impetuoſity, *Give me thy Heart!* Thoſe Infernal Serpents do, with a Thouſand *Wiles* and *Frauds*, lye at our *Hearts* continually. We read, in *Gen.* 49. 17. of *A Serpent by the Way, an Adder in the Path*, by which, *the Rider ſhall fall backward*. Where-ever we are, ſuch is our Danger; There is a *Serpent by the Way*, an *Adder in the Path*, which would fain throw our *Hearts* into the Mire of *Sin*, for them there to faſten Eternal Stings upon us.

It ſhould alſo be conſidered, Secondly, That both *God's Glory*, and our *own Comfort*, are conſiderably concerned, in our *keeping* of our *Hearts*. Briefly, our whole *Converſation*, will either be a *Good Converſation in Chriſt*, or elſe, the *Filthy Converſation of the Wicked*, according to this Caution. If we *keep* our *Hearts*, we ſhall *keep our Tongues as with a Bridle*; We ſhall *keep our Hands from doing any Evil*; We ſhall *keep* our *Garments*, or our whole viſible Behaviour, and, *Bleſſed is he who keepeth his Garments!* A *well-kept Heart*;

is that ſweet *Root* which bears all thoſe *peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs*; whereof our Lord ſays unto us, in *Joh.* 15. 8. *Herein is my Father Glorified, that ye bear much Fruit:* Nor is there a greater mark of *Sincerity*; a *kept Heart*, is a *ſound Heart*. It is ſaid, in *Prov.* 23. 7. *As Man thinketh in his Heart, ſo is he:* We may ſay, *As a Man keepeth his Heart, ſo is he.* Let a Man abound never ſo much in the External Exerciſes of Religion, he may be an *Hypocrite*, a *Phariſee*, a *Devil*, after all. This was the Rock that *Jehu* ſplit upon: *He took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord with all his Heart.* But when once a Man is indeed ſtudious about *keeping* his *Heart*, that Man is an *Iſraelite indeed!* If thou haſt a *Spirit* not *without Guard*, thou haſt a *Spirit without Guile!* Thou art an *upright* Man, if thou doſt keep thine *Eye* upon thine *Heart*. Thou wilt have Life and Peace, if thou art ſuch a *ſpiritual-minded Man*.

RULES.

I. If thou wouldſt *keep* thy *Heart*, then *know* thy *Heart*. It is the wretchedneſs of

of the *Heart*, mentioned in *Jer.* 17. 9. *The Heart is Deceitful above all Things, who can know it?* And this makes way for another complaint, *The Heart is Deceitful above all Things, who can keep it?* Let every Man ſtudy his own *Heart*, and learn what the Follies, and the Falſhoods of this *Impoſtor* are. There are Two extraordinary *Deceivers*, a cunning *Devil*, and a crafty *Heart*. About a cunning *Devil*, the *Apoſtle* could ſay, in 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. *We are not Ignorant of his Devices.* Oh! that we could all ſay ſo about a crafty *Heart*, *We are not Ignorant of its Devices!* It is by *Self-Ignorance*, that we become uncapable for *Self-Cuſtody*. If we *knew* the *Ways* at which our *Hearts* would leave us, we might *ſtop* thoſe Ways, and *keep* our *Hearts*. A Man would *keep* his *Heart*, if he would never *Truſt* it: Now no Man will *truſt* his *Heart*, after he once come to *know* it.

II. If thou wouldeſt *keep* thy *Heart*, then *fill* thy *Heart*. As now, Let our *Hearts* be well-fraighted with the *Grace* of God. An Heart *eſtabliſhed with Grace*, will

will be an Heart *preserved by Grace.* 'Tis said, in *Psal.* 37. 31. *The Law of God is in his Heart, none of his Steps shall slide.* The *Law* of God written upon the Heart, with a transforming Inclination, to Love the *Good*, and Hate the *Evil:* This would be a strong Lock upon your Heart.

Again, Let our *Hearts* be well-fraighted with the *Thoughts* of God. While a Man is *Thinking on the Lord*, he is *keeping of his Heart.* Be able to say, as in *Psal.* 16. 8. *I have set the* Lord *always before me.* When one of the *Antients* was enquired of, *What shall a Man do to be Serious?* his Advice was, *Realize the Omnipresence of God.* Thus, if it may be asked, *What shall a Man do, that he may always keep his own Heart?* The Advice may be, *Always be thinking on the God with whom thou hast to do.*

Once more, Let our Hearts be fraighted with the *Word* of God. If the *Word of Christ may dwell richly* in us, it will *keep* all things at rights within us. One could say, in *Psal.* 119. 11. *I have hid thy Word in my Heart, that I may not Sin against thee*

thee. *A* Treaſure of Divine *Commandments*, a Treaſure of Divine *Promiſes*, a Treaſure of Divine *Threatnings*, laid up in our Hearts, will be a matchleſs *Preſervative* unto them. Lay in ſuch a *Treaſure*, and be every day adding thereunto. Be on all Occaſions able and careful to ſay, *It is Written, it is Written, it is Written!* Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt Himſelf, *kept* His own Bleſſed *Heart*, under the Shelter of this Defence.

III. If thou wouldeſt *keep* thy *Heart*, then *bind* thy *Heart*. It was asked, in *Jer.* 30. 21. *Who is this that engaged his Heart, to approach unto me, ſaith the Lord.* Oh! that every Man here, might piouſly ſay, *Lord, I am he!* Let us lay our *Hearts* under the *Vows* of God, and not *caſt his Cords from us*. Come into the *Covenant* of God; and therein *engage* to Live *unto* Him, and *upon* Him; *engage* to Lament and Forſake every thing that ſhall offend Him; *engage* to converſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the Author of all this Good, and of all the *Eternal Salvation* that follows thereupon: *Engage* thus, with an humble Dependency on the *help*

of

of the Spirit of God, for our Aſſiſtance in it. Our *Covenant*, will be our *Cuſtody*.

IV. If thou wouldeſt *keep* thy *Heart*, then *ſearch* thy *Heart*. It would *keep* our Hearts in *Order*, if we would often *call* our Hearts to *Account*. It is enjoined in *Pſal.* 4. 4. *Commune with your own Heart upon your Bed.* When we are going to *Bed* at Night, let us bring our *Hearts* under ſome *Examination*: Ask them, *O, my Heart, where haſt thou been to Day?* Ask, *Haſt thou, O my Heart, been Serious, been Compoſed, been Heavenly, and been in the Fear of the Lord, all the Day long!* Certainly, ſuch a courſe as this would *keep* the *Heart*, at leaſt, from *ſore Plagues, and of long Continuance.* There was a Moral *Pagan*, who might make us Bluſh for this thing: *He*, even ſuch an one as *He*, did every *Night* Examine himſelf.

V. If thou wouldeſt *keep* thy *Heart*, then *fear* thy *Heart*. Let us be always *Afraid*, leſt our *Hearts* do forget our God, and neglect our Work, and contract ſome Diſtemper. We are told, in *Prov.* 28. 14. *Happy is the Man that feareth always.*

ways. When *Peter* was not afraid, that his *Heart* would runaway from his Lord, *then* 'twas that he *kept* it not. *A* Good Man would ſay, *I never truſted the* Lord *Jeſus Chriſt, but I found Him Faithful, nor my own Heart, but I found it Falſe.* The way to *keep* our Hearts true and right, is this; let us not be too ready to *think* them ſo.

VI. The *Heart* cannot be *kept*, without much *Prayer* unto the *keeper of Iſrael.* 'Tis ſaid, in *Pſal.* 127. 2. *Except the* Lord *keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain.* Thus it may be ſaid, *Except the* Lord *keep the Heart, the Chriſtian watcheth but in vain.* Oh, then let us by frequent and fervent *Prayers*, commit our *Hearts* into the *Hands* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Requeſt of Him, that we may be *kept by his mighty Power, through Faith unto Salvation.* It is the Rule, in 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let Men commit the keeping of their Souls unto God.* Well, when the Lord ſays, *keep thy Heart*; Let our anſwer be in our Prayer, *Oh! I cannot, I cannot; keep thou me, O* Lord, *and I ſhall be kept!* But when we carry our *Hearts* unto the Lord

Lord Jeſus Chriſt; let us be ſure to carry nothing leſs, than our *whole Hearts* unto Him.

Commit the *keeping* of our *Imaginations* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and pray, *Lord, keep me from every vain Imagination; and eſpecially from wandring Thoughts in My Devotions.*

Commit the *keeping* of our *Underſtandings* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and pray, *Lord, keep my Underſtanding, that it may not be tainted with any Erroneous Opinions in Religion.*

Commit the *keeping* of our *Memories* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and pray, *Lord, keep me from Forgetting thy* Law.

Commit the *keeping* of our *Conſciences* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and pray, *Lord, keep me from a weak, from a ſeared, and from a wounded Mind.*

Laſtly, Commit the *keeping* of our *Wills* and *Affections* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and pray, *Lord, keep my Heart from Immoderate Cares, when I have many Burdens lying on me.* Pray, *Lord, keep my Heart from Immoderate*

Griefs, when any grievous Bereavements Exerciſe me. Pray, *Lord, keep my Heart from Immoderate Frets, when fretting Injuries are offered me by other Men.* And pray, *Lord, keep my Heart from Immoderate Fears, when fearful Evils are to be Encountred.*

So our *Heart-work* may proſper gloriouſly.

THE

THE
Faithful Steward:
OR,
What are our *Talents*, and what the *Methods*, by which we may come to give a Good Account of our *Talents*?

MATH. XXV. 19.

After a long Time, the Lord of those Servants comes, and Reckons with them.

IT was no better a Man than a *Pagan*, whose Pen once dropt such a Speech, and a very notable surprizing Speech from a *Pagan* it was; *Ità vivamus, ut Rationem nobis Reddendam arbitremur*; Let us Live, as those that must come unto a *Reckoning*,: So said, the *Pagan* and *Roman* Orator.

What a ſhame will belong unto us, that wear the Name of *Chriſtians*, if we rarely or coldly think of the *Reckoning*, which we muſt certainly come unto! Truly, our being in this Fault, is the Great Cauſe, why there is to be ſeen ſo Little that is truly *Chriſtian* in the Lives of Men. 'Tis as kind a Thing, as can be done for us, to Revive in our Souls, the Thoughts of the *Reckoning* whereinto we ſhall be all brought by *God, the Judge of all.* He that thinks nothing of it, is worſe than a *Pagan*: He that thinks often of it, is an exemplary *Chriſtian.*

A *Parable* is a Similitude, in which the Doing of *ſomething* is feigned, for the truer Signification, and Illuſtration of ſome *Greater Thing*: And I ſuppoſe, There are about *Five* or *Six* and *Twenty* ſuch *Parables*, occurring in the Sermons of our Bleſſed Lord; wherein he condeſcends unto a *way of Teaching*, which tends to bring the Darkeſt and Rudeſt Minds into an Acquaintance with the Myſteries of Religion. In a

Parable,

Parable, there are Three Things conſiderable; the *Root*, that is, the *Scope*; the *Fruit*, that is, the *Senſe*; and the *Bark*, that is, the *Language* of it. Accordingly, if we penetrate into the *Parable* now before us, we ſhall perceive our Gracious Lord, here adviſing His Diſciples unto a Great *Watchfulneſs*, and *Induſtry*, in making uſe of their Opportunities for Good. Unto this End, we have the *Parable of the Talents* propounded unto us; wherein eſpecially, Four things offer themſelves unto our Notice. Firſt, An *Intruſtment*. Secondly, An *Improvement*. Thirdly, A *Reckoning*. Fourthly, A *Recompence*. All of theſe, may, within ſhort Limits, be explain'd unto us; but, in order thereunto, there is a ſolemn Aſſertion, which we are now to receive as the *Doctrine of God our Saviour*.

¶ The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, will, *One Day*, come to call Men unto an *Account*, about the various *Talents* wherewith He hath *Intruſted* them.

I do not know any One CASE of more Importance, to be conſidered by every Chriſtian in the World, than this;

What are the *Talents* with which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has Intruſted us? and, What are the *Methods* by which we may come to give unto our Lord a Good Account of our *Talents*?

And I will now endeavour ſo to handle the *Doctrine* before us, as that our whole Diſcourſe may may be but an anſwer unto the CASE propoſed.

Briefly then; There are Two *Truths* contained in our *Doctrine*, which are to be Recommended unto our moſt *ſerious Meditation*; and the *ſerious Meditation* of thoſe Truths, is the main Thing, by which we may come ſo to *know*, and ſo to *uſe* our ſeveral *Talents*, that we may *give up our Account with Joy*.

I. We are to Conſider, That there are various *Talents* wherewith every one of us, are *intruſted* by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

It is a *Queſtion* to be now Asked, and, Oh! that every Man of us would often Ask himſelf ſuch a *Queſtion*;

Our TALENTS, *What are they?*

For a more General Reply to that Queſtion, We muſt Underſtand, That our *Talents*, are all our *Opportunities* to *Glorify* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Give me your beſt Attention; For us to *render* from our *ſelves*, and for us to *procure* from *others*, due *Acknowledgements* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is to *Glorify* this our moſt Glorious Lord; I affirm, This to be the *Chief End*, for which we *Live* and *Move*, and *have our Being*. We are well-taught from our very Infancy, *That the Chief End of Man is to Glorify God.* And our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath *Bought* us, as well as *Made* us, for Himſelf; *He* is *God*, and the *Heir* of God, and the *Way* to God; and, according to *Joh.* 5. 23. we are to *Honour the Son as we Honour the Father*, if we would at all *Honour the Father*. Now, all the *Opportunities*, or Advantages, that

we

we have to ſerve this our Great END, Thoſe are our TALENTS. *Talents* they are called, becauſe we are truly *Enriched* by the having of them. We ſhould be, and, *Oh! that we were!* of this Perſwaſion, *That Opportunities, to Glorify the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are the trueſt Riches in the World.* As for all *earthly Poſſeſſions*, they are no *Riches* at all, any further, than they furniſh us with *Opportunities* to ſerve our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and if we have *Opportunities* to Do that Bleſſed thing, we have *Riches* enough, though we muſt ſay with that Good Man, *Silver and Gold have I none!* I tell you, That Man is no better than a *Mad-man*, who does not think ſo. An *Hebrew Talent*, was as much as Three Hundred Forty-two Pound, Three Shillings, and Nine-Pence, of *Engliſh* Money; and a *Talent* in *Gold*, was no leſs than Sixteen times as much; it was Five Thouſand, Four Hundred, and Seventy-five Pound Sterling. But it is very ſure, and, Oh! When ſhall we all think ſo! That an

Oppor-

Opportunity to Glorify our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is worth more than an *Hebrew Talent*, yea, tho' it were a *Golden* One.

But more particularly; There are eſpecially Two ſorts of *Talents*, which we are enrich'd withal.

Firſt, We have *Internal Accompliſhments*, whereby we may *Glorify* our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe our *Accompliſhments*, are either *common* ones, or *ſaving* ones, and our *Talents* are accordingly. All the *Faculties* of our Souls, are ſo many *Talents*; and if any Man have any thing Eminent, in his *Wit*, his *Reaſon*, his *Learning*, his *Judgment*, his *Memory*, the Man has a peculiar *Talent* in that Eminency; Oh! how much may he do, for the precious Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with ſuch a *Talent!* Let me add; Tho' it be an *Arminian* Abuſe of the *Parable* before us, to ſay, That *Common Grace* is a *Talent*, which a Natural Man may ſo uſe, as to *Deſerve*, or *Oblige* the *Special Grace* of Heaven; yet we may ſay, That the *Natural Abilities* of Men, to do ſome-

thing

thing for their own Souls, are ſuch *Talents*, that the neglect thereof will render them Inexcuſable. But if the *Grace* of God, have infuſed any Good *Principles* into our Souls, our *Talents* are yet more augmented; every *Grace* wherewith any Man is adorned, and ſtrengthened, is a *Talent* given to that Man; it is a *Talent* more valuable than the *Merchandiſe of Silver*, or the *Gain of fine Gold*; and he may therewith do more for the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, than other Men, that have not ſuch an heavenly Furniture within them.

Secondly, We have *External Conveniencies*, whereby we may alſo *Glorify* our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. As now, If God ſpare the *Life* of a Man, there is a *Talent* given to this Man, that he may *Work while it is Day*, and *Walk while it is Light*: Oh! be ſenſible of this; *Time* is a *Talent*, and ſuch a *Talent* it is, as whole Ingots, and Mountains of *Gold*, cannot come into Competition with. Again; If a Man have *Health*, and *Strength* of Body, this Man has a *Talent*

lent in it: He may do more for the Lord, than can be done by thoſe poor Men, that are *chaſtened with Pain upon their Body.*

Furthermore; All a Man's Friends, a Man has a *Talent* in them, and with them; eſpecially, every *Relation* that a Man ſuſtains, he enjoys a *Talent* by that Relation; ſuppoſe him a *Superior*, or an *Inferior*, or an *Equal*, he may do ſome ſpecial Thing for the Lord, in every one of theſe Capacities.

Yet further; A Man has a *Talent* in an *Eſtate.* He that has *Houſe*, or *Land*, or *Shop*, or *Ship*, or *Caſh*, or *Library*, has in each of theſe things a *Talent*, whereby ſomething may be done for the Lord that gave them all.

Moreover; A Man's *Calling* is his *Talent.* If a Man have, as every Man ſhould have, ſome Employment, wherein his *Neighbours* receiving Benefit from him, he may be likewiſe worthy to receive Benefit from his *Neighbours*, in this Thing he hath no little *Talent* of the Lord.

Once

Once more; The *Ordinances* of God, Oh! they are ineſtimable *Talents*. We may ſay of them, They are a *price in the Hand*, and a rich *Talent* they are, for the getting of *Wiſdom*; and the Lord will One Day, ſay of Millions, *Why was that Price in the Hand of a Fool!*

Yet more; A Man has a *Talent* in his *Reputation*; One of Good Credit, and Eſteem, obtains thereby, a ſort of *Command* over the Hearts of other Men; and ſuch a Man, by his *Intereſt*, may do more than other Men: This *Precious Oyntment*, is better than many a *Silver Talent*.

Finally; A Man in *Authority* has a *Talent* of a more than ordinary Conſequence. *All Power* is a *Talent*. One that is in any Place of *Power*, whether in a *Civil*, or *Sacred* Order, may do, Oh! how much for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt! in his *Place*; and, Let me earneſtly proteſt unto you, There is no *Place* under Heaven, worth having, if it were not for this *Uſe*, which is to be made of it. Be-

Behold, Chriſtians, What our *Talents* are! But there are a few *Reflections* to be made upon theſe our *Talents*, before we can fairly diſmiſs the *Provocations* before us, from our preſent Meditations; and it is from our Lord's Parable of the *Talents*, that we will fetch every one of theſe *Reflections*.

The firſt Reflection.

The *Talents* of Men, are as *various* as the *Perſons* of Men. It is here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25. 15. *Unto one he gave Five Talents, unto another Two, and unto another One.* There is the *Soveraignty* of Heaven in it, that all Men ſhould not be *Talented* alike; we are told, in 1 *Cor.* 12. 11. *The Spirit diſtributeth to every Man ſeverally, as He will*: It is not as *we will*, but as *He will*. All Men have not all the *ſame Talents*; As it was noted, about the Three Famous Miniſters of *Geneva*, *Vireto Nemo docuit dulcius, Farello Nemo tonuit fortius, Nemo doctius Locutus eſt Calvino*; Thus,

All Men are not capable to Do Good, in *One Way.* 'Tis ſaid, in *Rom.* 12. 4. *All Members have not the ſame Office:* And ſo, *All Chriſtians have not the ſame Talents.* And, among them that have the ſame *Talents*, all Men have them not, in the ſame *Degree* and *Meaſure.* Every Veſſel that ſails to Heaven, is not of a-like Bulk, and Shape, and Rigging. 'Tis ſaid, in *Eph.* 4. 7. *Grace is given according to the Meaſure of the Gift of Chriſt*; He *Meaſures* the *Talents* of Men, to one more, to another leſs, in His *Giving* of them. And as the *Sovereignty* of the Lord is conſpicuous in *Variety*; 'Tis *even ſo, our Saviour, becauſe it pleaſes Thee!* So, there is his *Wiſdom*, and His *Goodneſs*, illuſtrious in it. The *Beauty* of the Univerſe is herein wonderfully provided for; 'Tis fit that Men ſhould *Help* one another; and it is fit that Men ſhould not *Slight* one another. Now a *Diverſity* of *Talents* is accommodated unto this purpoſe wonderfully!

A Second Reflection.

Though all Men have not their *Talents* alike, yet no Men are without their *Talents*. It is here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25. 15. *He gave Talents to every Man, according to his Ability.* There is no Man whatſoever, but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt has done ſomething for him, and therefore, that Man may do ſomething for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: *Sua cuique Dos eſt.* When the Tabernacle of the Lord was to be built, indeed ſome could offer *Gold*, *Silver*, *Purple*, and *Jewels* thereunto; but others did offer *Wood*, and *Skins*, and *Hair* unto it; every Man was able to do ſomething. When the Lord was coming into the City, ſome ſpread *Garments*, others caſt *Branches*, and others cry'd *Hoſannah*; ſomething was to be done by every Man. Truly, There is not ſo much as the meaneſt *Servant* among us all, but, of ſuch a *Servant*, we are told, in *Tit.* 2. 10. *Servants may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour.* The

Least of us all may *confeſs* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by profeſſing and practiſing of Chriſtianity ourſelves: And yet, that is as *Great* a Thing as the beſt among us all can do. But, beſides this, There is no Man Living, but if he will ſet himſelf to it: Other Men will come to *ſee* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *prize* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *ſeek* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the more, by the means of that Man. Whatever *Society* any of us do belong unto, altho' the Rank we have in that *Society* be never ſo low, yet we may, in ſomething or other, be uſeful thereunto. Suppoſe a Man to be ſo poor, that he is not worth a *Farthing*, yet that Man has his *Talents*. What? Can you give no good *Council*, for others to follow? Or, Can you ſet no good *Copy* for others to follow? Or, however, I am ſure you may *pray* for them. The pooreſt Woman in the Town, that has the *Spirit of Prayer* in her, has a *Talent* which more than all the Town may fare the better for.

A Third Reflection.

Whatever *Talents* we have, they are *Betruſtments*; and it is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has *Betruſted* us with our *Talents*. It is here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25. 14. *He called His own Servants, and He delivered unto them His Goods, the Talents.* Do you mind? They are not our *own Goods* that we are poſſeſſed of, but they are, *The Lord's*; and he has not committed them unto us, as unto *Strangers*, who may chooſe whether they will be Reſponſible for them, or no; but as unto *Servants*, that are under all antecedent Obligations, to lay out our whole Selves, for the Intereſts of our Lord. All our Enjoyments, whence have we them? I would ſpeak it, in the Words of the Apoſtle, *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not Received?* We have Received all our *Talents* from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; it is His Providence, which diſpenſes unto *Men* their ſeveral Abilities; and from Him, as 'tis ſaid in *Jam.* 1. 17.

Comes down every Good Gift, and every Perfect Gift. But why does our Lord *Beſtow* our *Talents* upon us? Truly, 'Tis that we may *Employ* them for Him. Our *Talents* are *Gifts*, and ſo they call for our *Faithfulneſs*, and our *Fruitfulneſs*. Oh! that we were once come to be ſeriouſly of this Apprehenſion: We are not the *Owners*, We are but the *Feoffee*'s, We are but the *Stewards*, of all that we have.

A Fourth Reflection.

Our *Talents* are then laid out aright, when the *Service* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the *Welfare* of our own Souls, and the *Beſt Good* of other Men, is thereby promoted. The Lord that gave the *Talents*, here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25. 27. *Thou oughteſt to have put my Money to the Exchangers, and then, at my coming, I ſhould have Received my own with Uſury.* The ſhort of it is, He expects a Good *Improvement* of all that He gives unto us. Now, in the Improvement of

of our *Talents*, there are eſpecially *Three* Things to be purſued; and thoſe *Three* are in a manner *One*; I may ſay of them, *They are Lovely and Pleaſant in their Lives, and in their Death, they are not divided.* The *Service* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, That is the principal Thing, for which our *Talents* are to be Improved. *This*, truly, is the Grand Buſineſs that we have to do in the World; as our Lord Himſelf ſaid, in *Joh.* 18. 37. *To this End was I Born, and for this Cauſe came I into the World, that I might bear witneſs to the Truth*; So when we think of that Bleſſedneſs, *To be a Witneſs for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; Or, To be continually owning of Him as our Lord-Redeemer, and bringing of others to joyn with us, in our owning of Him; Oh! Let our Hearts, with an infinite Approbation, ſay, *To this End was I Born, and for this Cauſe I came into the World, and upon this Account would I Improve all that ever the Lord beſtow'd upon me in the World!* Man, Thou haſt an infallible mark of

an *Unregenerate Soul* upon thee, if thy Heart cloſe not with ſuch a Bleſſedneſs. But in the *Service* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we are to have a ſpecial Regard unto the *Welfare* of our own Souls; and we are ſo to Improve our *Talents*, that our Souls may be made more Holy, and more Happy by them. When the *Light*, and *Life*, and *Peace* of our *Souls*, is advanced by the means of our *Talents*, we deal honeſtly about them. And next unto the *Welfare* of our own Souls, the *Beſt Good* of other Men is to be Regarded with us; nor may we Improve our *Talents*, as if they were *Hidden Treaſures*, for our ſelves alone, but others, as far as may be, are to be the better for them; for we are to *Love our Neighbours as our ſelves*. Our *Talents* muſt be ſo Imparted, that others may thereby be Befriended, and Aſſiſted, in what they have to do for our *Common Lord*. Sirs, While we are not purſuing of theſe Things, with our *Talents*, we are all that while doing that curſed Thing, which the Apoſtle calls, *A ſowing to the Fleſh*.

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A Fifth Reflection.

A wiſe *Conſideration*, and a warm *Reſolution*, are needful to the Man that would lay out his *Talents* for the Glory of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. We find thoſe Two Crimes charged upon the Servant, who did not uſe his *Talents* aright, in *Mat.* 25. 26, 27. He did not *Think*, and he would not *Work*; he was, *A wicked, and a ſlothful Servant.* Wherefore, Firſt, Let every one of us, with a wiſe *Conſideration*, examine what our *Talents* are, and what we may do with our *Talents.* Whence is it, that our *Talents* lye by ſo much neglected and miſuſed? One great cauſe of it is, becauſe we ſo little enquire after them. As 'tis ſaid, in *Prov.* 13. 7. *There is, that maketh himſelf Poor, and yet hath great Riches.* Thus, there is many a Man that ſays, He has few, or no *Talents*, and, what can he do for the Lord! But, alas, Man, if thou wouldſt look again, thou mayſt ſee that thou haſt *Great Talents.* You and I ſhall

Bleſs

Bleſs the God of Heaven together, throughout all Ages, that we have ſeen one another to Day, if I may prevail with you, now to do this one thing; Let us ever now and then ſet apart ſome Time, to Study upon this Point, *What Opportunities have I, to Glorify my Lord Jeſus Chriſt?* Or, *What may I do for my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with my Opportunities?* Oh! Let us call over our *Talents*, and ponder with our ſelves, How the Lord *Enabled* us, *Related* us, obliged us, and contrive, what we ſhall do for Him, in our ſeveral *Capacities?*

Secondly, Let every one of us, with a warm *Reſolution*, fortify ourſelves againſt all Diſcouragements, in Trading with our *Talents*. 'Tis very certain, that every Man ſhould have a care how he *runs out of his Line*: 'Tis alſo certain, that we cannot eaſily think too *humbly* and *meanly* of our ſelves: Yea, 'Tis a criminal Ambition, for Men to puſh themſelves forward, unto things *too high for them*. Yet, all this hinders not, but that a Man ſhould, as the Apoſtle

poſtle ſpeaks, in 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee:* We ſhould *ſoberly* Judge of our own *Abilities* to Do Good; and then, *cheerfully*, and *valiantly* ſet our ſelves to do what Good we are able! There is a fooliſh *Modeſty*, and it may be *Cowardiſe*, in many Perſons, whereby their *Talents* are unhappily *Napkin'd* up. When a *Moſes*, or a *Jeremiah* are call'd upon, to bring out their *Talents*, then, *They cannot ſpeak!* When the *Talents* of a *Saul* are call'd for, then he is *hidden among the Stuff.* There are ſome that affect a *Privacy*, by which they defraud the Lord, and their Generation, of what is due from them, to the publick Weal. Why? They count, that,— *Benè qui Latuit, benè vixit*, They muſt expoſe themſelves to many uneaſy Circumſtances, if they will be Serviceable. But, Oh! beware of ſuch a Selfiſh, Narrow, Little Diſpoſition. You do not readily imagine, how offenſive it may be unto the *Lord of Hoſts*, for Men to decline the Duty of their *Station.*

Con-

Conſider theſe things, I pray you, in the *Fear* of God.

II. We are to Conſider, That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will, *One Day*, call every one of us unto an *Account*, about our *Talents*. There are Two very ſolemn Admonitions, to be now laid before us.

The Firſt Admonition.

There will be a *Day of Judgment*; Or, as the Apoſtle told the *Athenians*, in *Act.* 17. 31. *God hath appointed a Day in which He will Judge the World, by that Man, whom he hath ordained; whereof He hath given Aſſurance to all Men, in that He hath Raiſed Him from the Dead.* It is but what is here aſſerted unto us, in *Mat.* 25. 19. *After Long Time, the Lord comes, and Reckons.* Men count it *Long*; but we hope, He will now *come quickly!* There is an Eternal State of *Happineſs*, or of *Miſery*, whereinto the Righteous God will bring

bring Every one of us, according to our Behaviours here. But at the Entrance of that Eternal State, it is proper that a Diſtinct Account ſhould be taken, of what Every Man has *Done in the Body*, that ſo the Luſtre of the Divine *Juſtice*, in what is done to Men, may Strike the Conſciences of all Beholders. Hence, beſides a more particular Diſpoſal of Immortal Souls, by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, at the *Hour of Death*, a more Univerſal *Day of Judgment* is likewiſe intended, whereunto the *Mighty God* will Summon all Mankind, *from the Riſing of the Sun, unto the Setting thereof*. Beſides the many *Congraities* which there are, to Show that ſuch a *Day of Judgment* is very *Reaſonably* to be Expected, it is the Loud Voice of all the *Oracles*, in the *Scripture of Truth*. 'Tis a Memorable Paſſage of the Apoſtle *Paul*, in *Rom.* 2. 19. There is *a Day when God ſhall Judge the Secrets of Men, by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*. And it is the Suppoſition and Expoſition, of that Ancient, *Jerom*, up-

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upon this paſſage, that tho' the whole *Goſpel* is not Excluded, yet the *Goſpel* written by the Evangeliſt *Luke*, who was the Fellow-Traveller, and the Fellow-Labourer of the Apoſtle *Paul*, and who Wrote, probably, with his Direction, is moſt particularly therein deſigned. Now, if you turn to that *Goſpel*, and Eſpecially, to the *Seventeenth* and the *Twenty firſt* Chapters of that *Goſpel*, *There* you will ſee this *Day of Judgment* abundantly teſtified unto. Yea, the predictions of this *Great and Terrible Day of the Lord*, are enterwoven, throughout the whole *New Teſtament*; Nor, is the *Old*, I had almoſt ſaid, Nor is any *one Book* of the *Old*, without conſiderable Glances at it, conſiderable warnings of it. This is the thing foretold, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *By the mouth of all the Prophets*; they all ſpeak, as if they had but *one Mouth* concerning it. And the *Pſalms*, *They* do almoſt Every where touch upon it: Shall I quote one Sentence of many? The modern Jews demand of us, *Where do*

you

you find a twofold coming of the Messiah? And I have met with a Modern Jew, that has given an Answer to this Demand: Saith he, you may find it, in *Psalm.* 96. 13. *Rejoyce before the Lord; For He cometh, for He cometh to Judge the Earth*: You see, saith he, *He cometh!* there, twice over; and it is at the *Second Coming*, that He is to *Judge the World.* Yea, they look'd for a *Day of Judgment*, as long ago, as the Days of *Job*. The Antients Noted it, that *Job* Speaks as plainly of it, before Christ's Time, as almost any Since His Time. Higher yet, they look'd for a *Day of Judgment*, as long ago as the Days of *Abraham*: For *Abraham* Speaks of it, when he Pleaded with the *Son* of God, as we may Read it, *Will not the Judge of all the Earth, Execute Judgment!* Higher still; They look'd for a *Day of Judgment* as long ago, as the Days of *Enoch*: The People of God, had a little Scrol of *Enoch*'s Writing about it, among them, unto our Sa-

viour's Aſcenſion; and the Apoſtle *Jude* then Tranſcribed it into his Epiſtle; *Behold the Lord comes, to Execute Judgment upon all.* But why ſhould we dwell upon the proof of an *Article* which was never out of the *Chriſtian* Creed, no, nor of the *Jews* neither? I will Briefly ſay then, What we are to Expect.

Firſt, we are to Expect, That there ſhall be a *Deſcent* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, from the Bleſſed, the Starry, the Heavenly Regions, into our *Air.* So we Read, in 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. *The Lord Himſelf, ſhall Deſcend from Heaven, with a Shout, --- and We ſhall meet Him in the Air.* And then the Devils will be Diſpoſſeſſed of the Territories where they now *Rendezvous*; Falling as *Lightning*, and *with* Lightning, from their *High-Places.*

Secondly, We are to expect, That at the Deſcent of our Lord, the *Dead* ſhall be *Raiſed* out of their Graves, by His Quickening and Almighty Voice. That you Read, in *Joh.* 5 28, 29. *All*

that

that are in their Graves ſhall hear His Voice, and ſhall come forth. Our *Spirits*, will then Reaſume a fit Portion of the Duſt, whereto they were formerly United, and thereon ſhall be Built Incorruptible *Bodies*.

Thirdly, We are to Expect, That unto our Deſcended Lord, We ſhall give an *Account*, for all that We have *Seen* or *Done*, in this World. So we Read, in *Rom.* 14. 12. *Every one of us, ſhall give an Account of Himſelf unto God.* All our Actions will then be called over; *Cunctaq; Cunctorum Cunctis Arcana Patebunt.*

Fourthly, We are to Expect, that We ſhall then be Doom'd unto Everlaſting *Bleſſedneſs*, Or, *Confuſion*, according to the Account that is taken of us. Thus We Read, in *Mat.* 25, 46. *The Wicked ſhall then go away into Everlaſting Puniſhment, and the Righteous into Life Eternal.* If We are then found under the Character, of *Righteous*, We ſhall be admitted unto Interminable Joys, in the Preſence of

our Lord Jesus Christ; But, if under the Character of the *Wicked*, We shall be Banished into an Inexpressible Wretchedness, with the *Devil and His Angels*.

But, Fifthly, As a Preliminary to the General and Ultimate *Resurrection*, we are to Expect, that the *Saints* found and left alive, after the *Conflagration*, which begins the *Day of Judgment*, shall a long while Enjoy a Peculiar *Kingdom of God* among them. It is said, in 2. *Pet.* 3. 13. *According to His Promise, we Look for New Heavens, and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness*: There is a *Promise*, not only of *New Heavens*, but also of a *New Earth*, to take place at the *coming of the Day of God*. Such will be the *Day of Judgment*! Now,

The Second Admonition.

At this *Day of Judgment*, Every one of our *Talents*, must be Accounted for; and Personally, Impartially, Agreeably *Accounted* for. Our using of our

Talents, is called, *A Sowing*. And hence the Apoſtle, Urging of Perſons to ſpend as much as they can, of their Eſtates upon *Pious Uſes*, he Urges this, in *Gal.* 6. 7. *For whatſoever a Man Sows, that ſhall he alſo Reap.* Now as our Lord Elſewhere ſaid, *The Harveſt is the end of the World*: Even ſo at the *Day of Judgment*, Then is the Great *Harveſt*, When the preſent uſe of our *Talents*, will Iſſue in Everlaſting *Happineſs* or *Miſery*.

Now there are a few *Inſtructions* to be laid before us, concerning the Effect of our Well, or Ill uſing of our *Talents*, by laying up of which in our Hearts, we may mightily further our good Account at laſt; and We will fetch Every one of theſe *Inſtructions*, alſo from the Parable of the *Talents*, now in our View.

The Firſt Inſtruction.

From the Account that *Perſons* are to give of their *Talents*, to the Lord,

not

not one *Perſon*, and not one *Talent*, will be Excuſed by the Lord. It is here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25. 20. 22. 60. *He that had Received the Five Talents, came, and he alſo that Received Two Talents, came, and ſaid, Lord, Thou deliveredſt unto me,* thus and ſo. And they, *Reckon* ſtill, for as many *Talents* as they *Receive.* Yea, no doubt, may a Sinful Heart ſay, Doubtleſs, they that have had many *Talents*, and they that make ſome Figure, and have much Notice among Mankind, ſhall come to an Account; but, I that creep along thro' the World, and am little, have little, and can do little, Surely I ſhall Eſcape. No, as the Lord ſaid once unto *Moab*, ſo I ſay to thee, *Art thou he that ſhall eſcape? thou ſhalt not eſcape.* It is added, *Then he which had Received the one Talent came!* We may be ſure that Every *Man* ſhall come into the *Judgment* of the Lord: We find it in *Rom.* 14. 10. *We ſhall ſtand before the Judgment ſeat of Chriſt.* Yea, And we may be ſure that every *Thing* ſhall then likewiſe come into the *Judg-*

ment

ment of the Lord. We find it, in *Eccl.* 12. 14. *God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil.* There is not one person in the Congregation, [Oh! Let this matter Sink down into your Ears and Hearts this Day!] but what must make their Appearance in that vast Congregation, where the *Small* as well as the *Great*, shall *Stand before God*, And when we are *Standing* before the *Tribunal* of the Lord, Then, as we find, in *Rev.* 20. 12. *The Books will be open'd*; Even those *Books* wherein there is Entred, a particular Account of all the *Talents*, with which the Lord has favoured us. It will then be Exactly Enquired, *This man had such a Talent, and such a Talent; But what use did he make of it! He had these and those Opportunities to Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, but what Glory did he ever bring unto the Lord!*

A Second Inſtruction.

Not only the *Miſimprovement*, but alſo the meer *Non-improvement*, of *Talents*, will make a *Sad Account* for Men, in the Day of their *Accounts*. It is here ſaid, in *Mat.* 25, 26. He ſaid, *I went and hid thy Talent*; He does not ſay, I went and ſpent it in Riotous, or Miſchievous, Extravagancies: But, *His Lord anſwered, thou Wicked and Slothful Servant!* It is an Horrible *Wickedneſs* indeed, for Men to *Diſhonour* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *Prejudice* His People with their *Talents*; For Men that are capable of doing any thing, to do what is Provoking to God and Pernicious to Men, and for them to be but the more Profane, the more Senſual, the more Hurtful, becauſe they are *more Able* to be ſo: Such Men, do dreadfully *Heap up Wrath* againſt themſelves, by this their Monſtrous *Wickedneſs*. Yea, but there is a *Wickedneſs* in *Slothfulneſs* too. When the Lord comes to *Judge* the World,

World, He will Damn ungodly Men, to *Everlasting Fire* : Why so ? He does not say, Because you did such, and such *Harm* unto me ; but He saith, in *Mat.* 25. 45. Because you *Did Not* such *good* as you Might have done. Oh ! That this one thing were duly thought upon ! Even *Sins* of Omission do Expose Men unto the Terrible Wrath of God. It is not only said, *Every Tree that brings forth Friut, But, Every Tree that brings not forth good Fruit, is Hewn down, and Cast into the Fire.* Thus, 'tis not only, Every Man who *does Ill* with *his Talents*, but, Every Man who *does not Good* with them, that the *Vengeance of Eternal Fire* shall take hold upon.

A Third Instruction.

The *Greater Talents* any Man has Received, the *Greater Accounts* he has to give of his *Talents.* 'Tis what is here intimated in *Mat.* 25. 20. 22. *He that had Received Five Talents, came,* say-

saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me Five Talents; He also that had Received Two Talents, came, and said, Lord, Thou deliveredst unto me Two Talents: And their *Gains* they produce accordingly. Here is a thing which by the way, may Alleviate the Regret, of those that Complain of their being more *Meanly Circumstanced* than others are. Neighbours, you ha'nt such a great Account of *Talents* to give, as those greater Persons have. Tho' all Men are to *Do something* for the Lord Jesus Christ, yet there are some, to whom He Says, *What do ye more than others?* They that move in the *Higher Orbs*, are to Shine brighter, and shed more benign and helpful Influences, than others do. *Learned* Men may do more for God, than the Illiterate; why, Their *Talents* are greater. Thus, *Rich* Men, may do more than *Poor* Men; *Strong* Men, may do more than *Weak* Men; And Men that can *Command* others, may do more than those that are under Command: Their *Talents* are greater.

We

We have been adviſed, in *Luk.* 12. 48. *To whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be Required.* I beſeech you, let this thing be Realized with you: In the Day, when we ſhall have this Thunderclap from Heaven, Sounding in our Ears, *Give an Account of thy Stewardſhip!* It will be Critically Adjuſted, How many *Talents* have been Committed unto our *Stewardſhip*; and if we have had more *Talents* than other Men, it will be Suppoſed, that We ſhould have been more Holy, more Thankfuld, more Uſeful, and more Fruitful, With what we have had.

A Fourth Inſtruction.

Wo to us! Hideous Darkneſs, Horror and Vengeance, will belong to them, that can give no Good Account of their *Talents*. There is this double Doom denounced on the *Unprofitable Servant*, in *Mat.* 25. 28. 30. *Take the Talent from him, and Caſt the Unprofitable Servant into outer Darkneſs;*

there ſhall be Weeping & Gnaſhing of Teeth.

Indeed the *Loſs* of *Talents* will be one thing, in the Puniſhment of thoſe; who do not *Gain*, any thing for the Lord, with their *Talents*. It is often ſo, in *this World*: Men Forfeit their *Talents* by their *Unfruitfulneſs*. As the Lord ſaid, in *Hoſ.* 2. 8, 9. *She did not know, that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and Multiplied her Silver and Gold, which they prepared for* their Idols; *Therefore will I Return, and take it away.* So, 'tis very Rare, that any Comfortable thing is *taken away* from any of Us, but if We will Confeſs Ingeniouſly, we may ſay, *I did not uſe that thing, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt had no Revenues out of it, and therefore 'tis that a Writ of Ejection is now ſerved upon Me.* Sirs, I am to tell you, That Men are Turn'd out of their *Houſes*, Turn'd out of their *Eſtates*, Turn'd out of their *Places*, both in Church and State, yea, Turn'd out of all, very Often, be[c]auſe they did ſo little for the Lord

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt, with ſuch *Talents* as they had in their Hands. And in the *World to come*, 'tis Ever ſo. Unfruitful Men, ſhall then be Strip'd of all their *Talents* for ever; Oh! They ſhall then be in *Outer Darkneſs*, and Never have the *Light* of one *Opportunity* more, to do any thing for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or for their own Souls, till the very Heavens be no more: Alas, they ſhall then have no *Talents*, Except Heavy *Talents* of Guilt, whole *Talents*, and Mountains of Wrath, lying upon them, for Infinite Millions of Ages. But with what Anguiſh, will they *Gnaſh their Teeth*, when they ſhall feel their own Hearts thus Reproaching of them? *Remember, O Fool, Remember, the Good Things, which thou didſt in thy Life-time, receive at the Hands of the Lord: And Remember, O Wretch, Remember, what uſe thou didſt put all of thoſe things unto. Didſt thou ever Contrive how to Honour the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with thy Subſtance, or with any of thy Talents? No,*

Thy whole Contrivance was how to Serve thy own Carnal Intereſt, But how to ſerve the Intereſts of the Lord, This was a Thought which never came into thee. Now Smart for This, Bleed for this, Die for this for ever! Ah! Soul, 'Twill be an Intollerable *Hell*, to be Laſhed and Stung, with ſuch Direful *Scorpions.*

A Fifth Inſtruction.

Happy, Thrice, and Four-times, and Forever Happy the Man, whoſe *Talents* are well Husbanded for the Lord that gave them. -- The Doom of Such, a *Good and Faithful Servant*, is no leſs than that in *Mat.* 25. 25. 23. *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* A Joy too great to enter into us. A *Right Uſe* of *Talents*, here, is uſually Rewarded with an *Increaſe* of *Talents*; If any one Man among you all, have now an Heart ſet upon doing what he can, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, I will Venture to bring that Man, the moſt

moſt Joyful Tidings, that ever he heard in his Life; *Sir, Do not Fear; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, intends Marvellouſly to Multiply your Opportunity of being Serviceable.* And what a Comfort will it be unto us, while we *live*, to be able to ſay, with *Paul*, *this is our Rejoycing, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that we are always at Work for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt!* What a Comfort will it be unto us, when we Die, to be able to ſay, with *Hezekiah*; *Remember now, O Lord, how I have Walked before thee!* And, thro' the Merit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, all the Good that we have done with our *Talents*, will be Rewarded with Eternal Satisfaction. A Chriſtian once Pondering upon that thing, How, How may I glorify the Lord! Hapned then to Caſt an Eye thro' his Window, unto Heaven, and the Lord from Heaven, after a Powerful and Refreſhing manner, ſent this Conſolation, unto the Soul of him! *Surely if the Lord intended not forever to Glorify thee, in that Heaven,*

He would never have put it into thy Heart So to Glorify Him on Earth. Truly, what we do for the *Glory* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, being Sprinkled with his Blood, will be Recompenced, with Endleſs and Matchleſs glory from the Lord. The King of the *Ammonites* wore a *Crown*, as we Read, which Weighed a *Talent*: I ſuppoſe, the *Syriac* Talent, which was but a Quarter of the *Hebrew*, and about the weight of a Dozen Pounds. But, Sirs, All of our *Talents*, which we have uſed for the Lord, will be Turn'd into *Crowns*: Even into *Weighty Crowns of Glory*. To every *Steward* that uſes his *Talents* well, I ſay yea, not I, but the Lord, in *Luk.* 12. 43. *Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing.*

Sacred

Sacred Archery.

O R,

What may be ſaid for the Direction and Encouragement of thoſe *Prayers*, which we call *Ejaculatory!*

NEH. II. 4.
So I Pray'd unto the God of Heaven.

IT is a moſt Reaſonable, and a moſt profitable Advice of Wiſdom, in *Prov.* 23. 17. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord, all the Day long.* As we can ſee no Minute *all the Day long*; wherein it were Allowable for us to *Reject* the *Fear of God*, Or to do any of thoſe *Evil Things*, from which this true *Underſtanding* will Teach us to *Depart*: So it ſhould every Minute *all the Day long*, be our Study, to

Ex-

Expreſs the *Fear of God*, by that Exerciſe of Religion, which would be our Trueſt *Wiſdom*. *All the Day long*, our Dependance is upon the Lord for our Welfare; *All the Day long*, we *Have* many Favours, *All the Day long*, we *want* many Favours, of the Lord; And if *all our Life long*, we are Careful to ſpend *all the Day long* in the *Fear of the Lord*, it is all of it little Enough to be ſo Employed. I am ſure we ſhall think ſo, when we come to Receive our *Eternal Recompences!* But this being *in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long*, is a Myſtery of Practical Chriſtianity: How ſhall we Obtain, How ſhould we Maintain ſuch a Glorious Excellency?

Truly; Among the Various Methods of *Chriſtianity*, Wherein we are to keep Alive the *Fear of the Lord all the Day long*, one is our *Prayer to the Lord, all the Day long*. 'Tis in our *Prayer to God*, that our *Fear* of Him, draws its Breath; and thoſe Faults will ſtill go together, *Thou Caſteſt off Fear*,

Fear, and Reſtraineſt Prayer before God:

Now, there is one ſort of *Prayers*, wherein, we may moſt Literally, and moſt Peculiarly be *Praying all the Day long*; thoſe namely which we call, *Ejaculatory Prayers*, whereof, we have a notable Example, in that Famous Perſon; who in Anſwer unto ſuch *Prayers*, came to be the Governour of the Province of *Iſrael*.

Nehemiah Signifies, *A Comforter from the Lord*; and there was a *Nehemiah*, who proved ſuch an One, unto his Afflicted Country-men at *Jeruſalem*. By way of Supplement, unto what had been Written by *Ezra*, about the Return of the Jews, from their Babyloniſh Captivity, We have here an Hiſtory of the Services done for thoſe Returned Jews, Written by *Nehemiah* himſelf, who did the Services.

He took a Journey of *Nine Hundred Miles*, from the Court of *Perſia*, to *Jeruſalem*; the Occaſions and Circumſtances whereof, are here declared.

En-

Enquiring of his Kinſman, who was newly come from thence, *What was the Beſt News at Jeruſalem?* His Kinſman inform'd him, that the People were in a moſt Lamentable Condition there. This Great Man, who was a *Man that Sought the Welfare of the Children of Iſrael*, here upon, Firſt, Applied himſelf under the Almighty God, before whom he *ſat Down, and Wept, and Mourned, and Faſted, and Prayed many Days*; and then, he Addreſſed the Emperour, that his Imperial Majeſty would Grant him his Royal Licenſe, with a Safe Conduct, for a Travel to the *Place of his Fathers Sepulchres.*

By the over-ruling Hand, of a Wiſe and Good God, our *Nehemiah* now bore the Office of a *Cup-bearer*, unto the Greateſt Man, then under the Cope of Heaven; even, *Artaxerxes*. Perhaps, the *Syrian* Wine, being the moſt grateful unto the Perſian Monarch, our *Nehemiah*, a well Accompliſhed Native of *Syria*, might be Preferr'd

Preferr'd unto this Office before another. But, when it came unto his Turn, to Perform his Office, the *Emperour* obſerved a very Senſible and Suſpicious Alteration in his *Countenance*; which being Intimated, he made a moſt Ingenuous *Apology*, with a moſt Pathetical *Narative*, of the Affliction then upon him. The Emperor upon this, very Frankly Offers, *Well, wherein may I Accommodate you?* But *Nehemiah* diſtreſſed at the Weight, and at the Time of this Offer, no leſs Prudently than Piouſly takes this Courſe, *Now I Pray'd unto the God of Heaven.* He would not *Speak* unto the King, until he had firſt *Spoke* unto the King of Kings: He would not Open his *Mouth* unto his Lord, until he had opened his *Heart* unto the Greater Lord.

It is generally Conceived, That this *whole Tranſaction* being diſpatch'd at this *One Interview*, it could be no other than an *Ejaculatory Prayer*, wherein we find our *Nehemiah* now Engaged.

gaged. His *Prayer* might not be *Long*. For a Ruſtick Silence, would have been Interpreted as an Affront unto that Princely Preſence, wherein he was now Standing. His *Prayer* might not be *Loud*; for that would have been the Commiſſion of a Groſs Abſurdity among Noble Perſonages, Expoſitions agree in this Note, upon the Text, *Behold, an Example of Ejaculatory Prayers.*

What were the Wiſhes of this Holy Man, in his *Ejaculations*, 'tis Eaſy to Imagine, from the Nature of the Buſineſs, about which he was Con-cerned ~~ceived~~. Probably, his Holy Soul gave a Sudden look, to the *God that had the Hearts of all Men in His own Hand*, with ſome ſuch Sentence, as we find Elſewhere in this Book of his; it might be, *Lord, proſper thy Servant this Day!* Or, *Lord, Give me I pray thee, Mercy in the Sight of this Man.* However we will ſuppoſe this Leſſon Countenanced in it;

It

It is a Good Thing for all Men on Earth, to be Frequently Sending up their Ejaculatory Prayers, unto the Great God of Heaven.

I will Allude unto the Words of the Pſalmiſt, and ſay, *As Arrows in the Hand of a Mighty Man, ſo are* Ejaculatory Prayers; *Happy*, yea, Thrice and Four-times Happy, *is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them*;

¶ Something, about the Nature of *Ejaculatory Prayer*, may Conveniently be Premiſed.

You know in General, That *Prayer is the preſenting of our Deſire to God in Chriſt, for His Mercy, in His Time, and His way, and His Meaſure, to be obtained.*

You know in Particular, that *Prayer* is diſtinguiſhed into *Ejaculatory* or *Continued*, according as Men are Briefer or Longer in it.

You may gather from hence, That *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are the Shorter and Sudden Preſentations of our *Deſires to God in Chriſt, for things agreeable*

to His Will. They are the Shorter and Sudden Expreſſions of our Wiſhes before the God of Heaven; our Wiſhes that God may be *Praiſed*, or our Wiſhes that our ſelves may be *Bleſſed*,

In a Word; *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are, *a Prayer in a Word.* They are the ſively Meſſengers which we ſend Poſt unto Heaven, on ſome good Errand, when our Conveniencies will not Afford, and admit a more *Fixed Prayer.*

Or, We will keep a Correſpondency with the uſual Epithit of *Ejaculatory*, which cuſtom has Applied unto theſe *Prayers*. 'Tis derived from, *Jaculus* a *Dart.* Now, it has been the *Stratagem* of Beſieged Cities, when Invaders have Interpoſed between them and their Auxiliaries, that they have in ſuch an Exigency Tied their Letters unto *Arrowes*, which they have Shot over the Heads of the Beſiegers, into the Hands of thoſe Auxiliaries. Thus, We cannot always have a more

Settled

Settled Communion with our God; but with *Ejaculatory Prayers*, we Shoot over the Heads of all our Beſieging Incumbrances, thoſe *Arrows*, which will make a Nimble Diſpatch of our Buſineſs in Heaven for us.

As for the *Properties* of theſe *Ejaculatory Prayers*, 'Tis enough to Say, They have no Ornament but *Fervency*, no Eloquence but *Affection*, and no Contexture but *Neceſſity*.

As for the *Diſtinctions* of theſe *Ejaculatory Prayers*, They are either *Mental* only; that is, when we only lift up our Hearts, unto the God that knows the Thoughts of our Hearts: Or, They are *Vocal* alſo; that is, when we have the Liberty of our Voice, to Form and Sound the Effects of our Thoughts.

But Waving all further Preliminary Deſcriptions of *Prayerful Ejaculations*, I ask you to accompany me, in conſidering the CASE, now to be Propoſed.

What

What may be said for the Direction, and Encouragement, of the Faithful, in the use of their Ejaculatory Prayers. Altho' *Ejaculatory Prayers* are one of the frequenter and Signalleſt *Exerciſes* in the Life of a Chriſtian, I cannot call to mind, that ever it has yet fallen in your way to have an Hour Given you upon it. For which cauſe this *Caſe* is now to Entertain you: And you are to take what is to be ſaid, in the following Admonitions.

I. AReal and a Thorough *Turn* of *Regeneration*, having been once given to the Mind of any Man, the Mind of that Man will Readily *Turn* to the God of Heaven, by *Ejaculatory Prayers*, when ever called thereunto. Let a Man get an *Heavenly Mind*, and he will find it no Irkſome Thing to be giving his Daily Looks unto the God of Heaven.

In Regeneration, the Spirit of God powerfully touches the Spirits of Men; and that Spirit, is, as we are told by Him, in *Zech.* 12. 10. *The Spirit of Grace*

Grace and of Supplication. Hence, as when the *Needle* has been touch'd by the Load-ſtone, it's Continual Tendencies are to the *North*, ſo the Tendencies of a Soul, Touch'd by the Spirit of God, are to God himſelf Continually; and the *Grace* wrought in ſuch a Soul will appear by it's inceſſant *Supplication* unto God, *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are the naturalleſt Motions of an Heaven-born, and an Heaven-touch'd Soul. By *Regeneration*, Men are brought into a *Walk with God*. Firſt we *Live*, and then we *Walk*; but it is *with God*; and, How is that? It is thus; we have then a Diſpoſition to take Notice of *God*, in Every Step of our *Walk*. But by what means may we do that? We do it, by our *Ejaculatory Prayers*. It is the Language of a Man that *Walks with God*, in *Pſal.* 25. 15. *Mine Eyes are ever towards the Lord*: He is thus ever caſting his Eye, towards that *Heaven*, whereto he is *Walking* every Day.

Regeneration, will infuſe a principal of *Holineſs*, into us; now that *Holineſs*, is Deſcribed, in 1. *Pet.* 1. 15. As an *Holineſs in all manner of Converſation*, The Greek, the Latin, the Engliſh Word, here uſed, come from a Verb, that ſignifies, *To Turn*; which way ſo ever we *Turn*, *Regeneration* would make us *Holy* there; *Holy* at home, and *Holy* abroad; *Holy* in *Secret*, and *Holy* in *Society*; *Holy* in our *Tradings*; *Holy* at our *Tables*, *Holy* in every Place, and *Holy* in every Thing. But a *Turn of Holineſs*, would be ſeen by a *Turn of Prayerfulneſs*. One thus *Turned*, would gladly be ever *Turning* to the God, whom he has Choſen, for his God, his Good, his Lord, his End for ever. Oh! How glad would ſuch a Man be, to have Hundreds of *Turns* to and with his God, every Day?

Man, Get a *New Heart*, and *Ejaculatory Prayers* will ſoon be found Agreeable and Familiar, unto thine *Heart*.

To

To ſay no more ; It may be there are ſome Scoffers at *Ejaculatory Prayers*, among us. Thoſe Fooliſh Men, who venture all their Immortal and Eternal Intereſts, upon that one *Ejaculatory Prayer, Lord have mercy upon me!* Are oftentimes the Deſpiſers of all *Ejaculatory Prayers* whatever. *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are a ſort of Devotions, which may complain, as once the Pſalmiſt that much uſed them did ; *The Proud have had me greatly in Deriſion* ! But it is a Cenſure which may be freely and ſurely paſſed upon thoſe unhappy *Scorners* ; *They are Unregenerate Souls ? They are yet in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and the Bond of Iniquity* ; ſuch are they who do not apprehend the *Sweetneſs* of *Ejaculatory Prayers*, and who reckon it a *Bondage* to be Obliged unto them.

II. We have many ſorts of *Occaſions*, for all ſorts of *Ejaculatory Prayers*, and we ſhall *walk Circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as wiſe* if we lay hold, on all thoſe *Occaſions*. It is indeed Im-

Impossible for us to mention all the truly Innumerable *Occasions* for *Ejaculatory Prayers*; but if we shall watchfully Improve such *Occasions* as I am now going to mention, we shall be *Taught of God*, how to Improve the rest.

Know then, that there may be a Distribution of *Ejaculatory Prayers*, into *Hosannahs*, and, *Hallelujahs*: *Hosannah*, you know signifies, *Lord, save now, I beseech thee*; *Hallelujah*, signifies, *Praise the Lord.* Both of these Things, are to be said, in our frequent *Ejaculations.*

First: We have abundant *Occasions* for *Ejaculatory Petitions*, and we should abound in such *Petitions.*

On the behalf of *our selves*, we have many *Occasions*, for *Supplicatory Ejaculations*: Let us then be concerned for ourselves, with such *Supplications.*

The Favours of God, for our *Inward Man*, may on many *Occasions* be Supplied with our *Ejaculations*; Let us pursue those Favours.

As

As now; We may take *Occaſions* for ſuch *Ejaculations* from the *Ordinances* of God.

Before we ſet upon any Signal *Act* of Worſhip, there is an *Occaſion* for ſome ſuch *Ejaculations* as that, *Lord Aſſiſt me to draw Water out of this Well of Salvation!* Or that, *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the thoughts of my Heart. be Acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord!*

And all the while we are in the *Act* of Worſhip, there is yet more *Occaſion* for Multiplied *Ejaculations.*

While we are Joining with another in *Social Praying*, We may fix our Wandring Hearts, by Annexing ſuch a pertinent *Ejaculation* unto all that he utters, as, Lord, I own it; or, *Lord, I Ask it!*

When the Congregation that ſat under our Lords Miniſtry, Heard Him, who was *It*, ſpeak about *The Bread of Life*, they preſently made an *Ejaculation* of it, *Lord, give us this Bread forever!* Thus in the Hearing

ing of a Good Sermon, a Studious Head and a Gracious Heart, may make a Serious *Ejaculation*, upon every Article that ſhall be Offered. Little do you know how many Scores of *Ejaculations* proceed from the *Preacher* while he is getting his own Sermon, I ſay, not by *Head*, but by *Heart*, before he comes Abroad. And may not the *Hearer* digeſt the Sermon into as many *Ejaculations* when it ſhall be Publickly Pronounced? Poſſibly, not one *Head*, and not one *Text*, in all the Sermon, may paſs without ſome Suitable *Ejaculation* from the Soul, of ſuch a Laborious Hearer. *Ecchoing* back to the Words, of God. And when the Sermon is over, is there no occaſion for us, to go out of the Aſſembly, with ſuch an *Ejaculation*, as that, *Lord, keep theſe things in the Imagination of the Thoughts of my Heart forever*,

How ſhall we *Worthily* Approach to the Lords Table? Do it *Prayerfully*. And, Oh! What plentiful *Occaſions* for *Ejaculations* there! Our

Our *Meditations*; A Woful *Uncleanneſs* cleaves to our Souls, if we do not often *Ruminate* upon the *Truths* of God: But it will be moſt Convenient for us, to intermix Multitudes of *Ejaculations* in thoſe *Ruminations*.

In the *Singing* of a Pſalm, yea, and in the *Reading* of a Chapter, would we do to purpoſe what we do? We may try whether we can't form ſome *Ejaculation* out of every Verſe, as we go along. Moreover, From all the *Works* of God, we may take further *Occaſions* for ſuch *Ejaculations*.

The *Works* of *Creation*; We ſhould ever now and then, be creating of *Inſtructions* for ourſelves out of them. A *Fruitful Heart*, will make the whole Creation *Fruitful*; and fetch Fine *Lectures*, and *Leſſons*, from all the Creatures of God. The Little *Fragment*, and *Filings* of our Golden Time, in the Intervals of our Buſineſſes, might be thus placed, with a Wondrous *Husbandry*. But now, Diſmiſs not

any

any of thoſe *Reflections*, without ſome *Ejaculations*, from thence, unto the Lord.

The Works of *Providence*; and Eſpecially thoſe which more immediately fall upon ourſelves: As they come *from* God, ſo they ſhould make us Go *to* Him. When we ſee any *Comfort* conferred on us, here is a room for an *Ejaculation*, *Lord*, *Help me to Employ this Talent, for thy Glory!* When we feel any *Trouble*, Inflicted on us, here is a room for an *Ejaculation*, *Lord*, *Help me to Bear and Fear thy Rod!*

Furthermore, We may Supplicate the Favours of God, for our *outward Man*, by our *Ejaculations* on many *Occaſions*. Let us then ſo purſue theſe Favours alſo.

Every New matter of *Care*, brings with it a New matter of *Prayer*. What ſhall we do, but by a Short *Ejaculation* carry it unto the Lord. It would be a Glorious Thing, if we could Reſign all our New Concerns every Hour,

Hour, unto the Diſpoſal of our God, who *performeth all things for us*. But it cannot explicately and comfortably enough be done, without *Ejaculations*. And thus the Smile of God may be asked upon all that we have to do. When a Servant of *Abraham* had ſome Affairs of his Maſter's to look after, he had this *Ejaculation* upon it; *Lord, ſend me good ſpeed!* There is now with God, one gone from this very Pulpit, who would never anſwer a weighty Queſtion, without the pauſe of a preceding *Ejaculation*, unto that Lord from whom is, *The anſwer of the Tongue*. The Occaſions of ſuch *Ejaculations* are every Day multiplied unto us. Yea, How often in a Day have we occaſion to wiſh, *Lord, Let thy good Angels have the charge over me!* Or, *Lord, my help is in Thee, who didſt make Heaven and Earth.*

To proceed: On the behalf of *others* too, we have many *Occaſions* for *Supplicatory Ejaculations*: Let us then be concerned for others, with ſuch *Supplications*.

It is not ſeldom that we have *Occaſions* of *Ejaculations* for the whole *Church* of God, That *Ejaculation*, *Lord, Save thy People!* That *Ejaculatory*, *Lord, Build up the Walls of Jeruſalem.* That *Ejaculation*, *Lord, Let thine Enemies be Scattered!* Theſe are *Ejaculations* often called for.

Thus, *Elder* Perſons may very fitly Bleſs the *Younger*, with *Ejaculations* over them. It was no Improper *Ejaculation* that *Joſeph* had over *Benjamin*, *The Lord be Gracious to thee, my Son!* And Methinks, a Parent may find it almoſt an Hard Thing to behold his Children, without ſome ſuch *Ejaculation* over them. *Lord, make, and Save, and uſe this Child, as thy own for ever!*

Nor is that Counſel, which in my own Childhood, I remember, that I heard given by my Careful School-Maſter, to be forgotten: *You that are Children, beſure to ſhew ſome Reverent Regards unto every good old Perſon that you meet; for that may occaſion that old*

Saint

Saint, perhaps to let fall a Bleſſing upon you, and for ſuch a Bleſſing you may happen to fare the better for ever!

And have thoſe that are more *Equals*, no *Benedictions* for one another, to be conveyed in charitable *Ejaculations*? Yes, The *Ejaculations* that paſſed between *Boaz* and his *Reapers*, *The Lord be with you!* and, *The Lord Bleſs you!* they are Calculated for the Lips of us all, towards one another. It was the Rule which one that is now in Glory preſcribed unto himſelf and others, *When I think of my Friend, let it be with a praying Thought!*

Be ſure, whenever we are informed of any Neighbour in any Affliction, our charitable *Ejaculations* are beſpoke upon it; Then, *God pity them!* and, *God ſtrengthen them!* and, *God ſuccour them!* thoſe are the *Ejaculations* not Impertinent. Yea, While we walk in the *Street*, or ſit in a *Room*, with our Minds otherwiſe wholly unemployed, it is pitty to loſe this Time. Is it not poſſible now for us, to uſe our *Wit*, as

well as our *Grace*, in contriving of ſome ſuitable *Bleſſing* for ſuch and ſuch Perſons as are then before us; and there form it into ſome *Ejaculation* for them, which we will never diſcover unto any but that God, who *knows our Thoughts afar off*? What an Inexpreſſible deal of *Charity*, may we contrive into our *Ejaculations*! And, I'll ſay this farther, if they for whom we make our *Ejaculations*, don't receive all that we therein Requeſt for them, we ſhall receive it all our ſelves. My Fellow-Travellers, There ſhall not one *charitable Ejaculation* be thrown away!

But, Secondly, We have abundant *Occaſions* for *Ejaculatory Thankſgivings* likewiſe; and we ſhould abound in ſuch *Thankſgivings*.

Our *Gratulatory Ejaculations*; How many, how mighty are our occaſions for thoſe *Gratulations*! May we ſnatch at all *Occaſions* for thoſe *Ejaculations*, *The Lord be magnified!* and, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul!*

All

All the *Occaſions* which may Occur for our *Prayers*, do ſollicit ſometimes for our *Praiſes* too.

And, Every *Diſpenſation* of God, may be an *Occaſion* of ſome *Ejaculation* to Him from us. The Primitive Believers, when they talk'd of their *Sufferings*, they did it with ſuch an *Ejaculation* thereupon, as *Deo Gratias*, or, *The Lord be Thanked!* And ſhall not we then talk of our *Enjoyments* in ſuch a Strain as that? When any conſpicuous *Mercy* is beſtow'd upon us, then certainly we may diſcover our Gratitude by ſome grateful *Ejaculation* upon it; ſaying, *Lord, Thou art good, and thou doſt good!* Yea, whenever any *Attribute* of God, is by any Effects manifeſted unto us, we may, by ſome adapted *Ejaculation*, celebrate that Attribute. Straightways then direct ſuch an *Ejaculation*, as, *Lord, how great is thy Power, thy Wiſdom, thy Juſtice, thy Soveraignty, and thy Bounty!*

And this is one remarkable expedient whereby, whether we *Eat* or *Drink*,

or whatever we *Do*, we may *Do all to the Glory of God.* We may String every diſtinct Action of our Lives upon a Religious Thread, by ſuch an *Ejaculation* over it, *Lord, may this be for thy Glory!*

III. *Diſpoſitions* and *Abilities* for *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are a Furniture ſo excellent, but ſo difficult, that without ſome well-placed Labour, we ſhall not be *Diſpoſed* and *Enabled* thereunto. Particularly, our Heaven-ward *Ejaculations*, will be ſeldom enough, if we are not convinced, what helpleſs, what worthleſs, what undone *Worms* we are, without the Compaſſions of our God.

Again: Our *Ejaculations* Heaven-ward will be feeble enough, if we are unmindful of the many *Benefits* wherewith our God is *daily Loading* of us. I'll ſay but this, Did we ſeriouſly make that one *Ejaculation* often before the Lord, in *Pſal.* 119. 19. *I am a Stranger in the Earth*, we ſhould then, by many *Ejaculations* more, keep up our Conformity to the Condition of being *Strangers*

gers every where, but in that Heaven whereto we are Travelling every day.

Once more; Let us be very Diligent in peruſing the Book of *Pſalms*; a Book wherein *Ejaculations* fill both Pages; and *Ejaculations* that may ſuit all of our Emergencies: For this Cauſe this Book has been ſometimes called, The Godly Man's *Vade Mecum*. Some of the moſt memorable *Ejaculations* that came from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, yea, ſeveral of his *Ejaculations* in his Dying Agonies, were fetch'd out of this very *Book*.

Briefly, Let the *Thoughts* of God, and of his Kingdom, ſo dwell in us, that indeed we ſhall not be one waking Hour without them; that will make our *Prayers* proportionable; it ſhall be ſaid, as in *Pſal.* 139. 17. *O God! how great is the ſum of them?*

Eſpecially, mind much, whatever may be the *Voice* of God unto us; that we may Reverberate it, with ſome *Ejaculation* of a complying Soul.

IV. *Eja-*

IV. *Ejaculatory Prayers*, by ſome, are perverted into Cuſtomary, and unſuitable *Formalities*; but *from ſuch we are to turn away.*

Albeit, We ſhould be never ſo *Earneſt*, in our *Ejaculations*, yet we ſhould not be too broad in ſignifying them to others that are about us. It is baſe *Phariſaiſm* and *Hypocriſy*, when a Man cannot ſhape hundreds of *Ejaculations* without calling of others to be Witneſſes. And it would ſavour too much of *Cant*, for ſome ſorts of Perſons to *Speak* always all that they ſhould *Think*, in their wiſhing of the *Things that are Holy, and Juſt, and Good.*

But, alas, How many are there far from *Earneſt* at all, in their *Ejaculations?* When we are ſick or pain'd, we cry out, *Lord, help me!* But have we then always our believing *Thoughts* on the *Help of the Lord!* How many will profanely ſay, *Lord, Bleſs me!* when yet they devoutly Think neither of the *Lord*, nor of his *Bleſſing* them? How many will profanely ſay, *I thank God!* when

when yet they devoutly Think neither of *God*, nor of their *Thanking* him? It may be, they will interlard their Diſcourſes with a ſtrange *Medley* of *Ejaculations* and *Profanities*. They will expreſs themſelves *Profanely*, and then *Ejaculate* a *God Forgive me!* tho' their fooliſh, frothy Souls, are all the while wholly unconcern'd about *Forgiveneſs*. Theſe Perſons are too much a Kin to *Common Swearers*; a *Common Swearer* is but thine *Elder-Brother*. Oh! That ſuch Perſons would awfully think on the *Third Commandment* of God, wherein he ſays, *I will not hold them Guiltleſs, who take my Name in Vain!*

V. Great will be the *Folly*, great the *Abuſe* of it, if our *Ejaculatory Prayers* are made an Excuſe, for our Omitting of our more *Compoſed Prayers*.

As, on the one ſide, we have no call to be ſuch *Euchitæ*, or *Praying Folks*, as were a Sect among the Ancients; or to neglect our particular Vocation, and let all our ſecular Matters lye at Sixes and Sevens, under the pretence of *Pray-*

Praying Always: Thus, on the other ſide, we muſt beware, leſt, under the pretence of *Praying Always*, we come to be the moſt *Prayerleſs Folks* in the World.

There have been ſome *Fanaticks*, who, under the colour of keeping every Day as a *Sabbath*, have indeed kept no *Sabbath* at all. Of the ſame Family are they that, under the colour of *Ejaculatory Prayer*, do indeed caſt off all *Prayers* altogether.

The Prieſts were to keep the *Holy Fire* always Burning on the *Altar*, but yet they were to have their *Stated Sacrifices* every *Morning*, and every *Evening* too. It is in Alluſion to that very Thing, that the Apoſtle gives this charge unto *Maſters*; I ſay, unto all *Maſters*, whether on *Shore* or at *Sea*; in *Col.* 4. 2. *Continue in Prayer.* Truly, By a certain vigour of Soul, in *Ejaculatory Prayers*, we ſhould conſtantly keep the *Holy Fire* alive, on the Altar of a *Broken Heart* within us; yea, but we muſt have our *Stated Seaſons* every Day

Day, for more protracted, more dilated *Sacrifices*. Every Master is, twice every day, to call his People together, and solemnly spread their common Concernments together before the Lord. It is a *Pagan Family*, where God shall not be thus Worshiped; and the Eternal God has threatened, That he will *pour out his Fury on the Families which thus call not on his Name.* If there are any such prodigious Families in such an enlightened Land as ours, *God be merciful!*

But is this all? No: We profess our selves the *Disciples*, the *Followers*, the *Subjects* of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ; and wo to us, if we are not so! Now, 'tis the Injunction of our Lord, that we should *every Day* do that thing, in *Mat.* 6. 6. *Enter into our Closet, and shut our door, and pray to our Father, which is in secret.* Thus are we to do, as often as we are to beg, *This day give us our daily Bread*; and, I am sure, this is to be done *every Day.* This I will venture to say, They who do not *Pray in secret*, most certainly *Sin in secret.* In

In Fine: *Healthy* Persons, may eat a *Bit*, or drink a *Cup*, as they please, between their Meals; but if they should Live at this rate neglecting their ordinary Meals, they will not be *Healthy* long. *Ejaculatory Prayers*, are very good *Interpositions*, and *Interpolations* unto our Duties; but if contenting our selves therewithal, we take not our daily Opportunities, more deliberately to converse with God, we shall have but *Starved Souls within us*; there will be *Leanness sent into our Souls*.

VI. We have the Illustrious *Example* of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the better ordering of our *Ejaculatory Prayers*, unto the *God* and *Father* of our Lord, who in him, is *ours* also.

Those Renowned Men, who had been the Types of our Lord Jesus Christ, before his Incarnation, were noted many of them to be skilful *Practitioners* at the Art of *Ejaculatory Prayer*. And when our Lord became Incarnate, he did very much Practice that kind of *Prayer* himself.

Once,

Once, in the midſt of his *Preaching*, our Lord broke forth into that mixed *Ejaculation*, in *Joh.* 12. 22. 28. *Father, ſave me! Father Glorify thy Name!*

It was a pathetical *Ejaculation* which our Lord had in *Joh.* 11. 45. *Father, I Thank thee, that thou haſt Lov'd me!*

It was a cœleſtial *Ejaculation* which our Lord had in *Mat.* 11. 25. *I Thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth!* What were the *Salutations* of our Lord? I verily Believe, there were ordinarily *Ejaculations* in them: When he met People, he would ſay, as in *Joh.* 20. 26. *Peace be to you!* I believe at this Inſtant, his heavenly Soul would ordinarily direct unto his everlaſting Father, ſome ſuch *Ejaculatory Prayer* as this, *Father, let theſe Perſons have thy Peace!*

Yea, I may ſay, about our Lord's *Ejaculations*, as *John* ſays about his Actions. *If they ſhould be written, one would ſuppoſe, that the whole World could not Vend the Books which ſhould be written.*

And, as our Lord *Lived* in houſly

Ejaculations to Heaven, thus he *Dyed* in the midſt of ſuch *Ejaculations*.

His Bloody Murders, had no ſooner Nail'd him to the execrable Tree, and ſunk the Tree with an horrid Jerk, into the Socket prepared for it, but preſently there came from him that moſt wonderful *Ejaculation* on the behalf of thoſe Murderers, *Father, Forgive them*! Yea, the laſt Words which flew from him on the Croſs, articulated his *Laſt Breath* into an *Ejaculation* too, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*! Well then, methinks I over-hear our Lord reminding us, of what once he ſaid, in *Joh.* 13. 15. *I have given you an Example.* May we now, in this very thing, ponder and follow an *Example* ſo unexceptionable.

VII. Let us conſider the obliging Invitations which we have, to be much in *Ejaculatory Prayers*, that ſo we may become as effectually *Invited*, as we are powerfully obliged thereunto. What perſwaſive Things are there to be ſaid, for theſe heavenly *Salleys* of our Souls? Let us think a little. Firſt,

First, *Ejaculatory Prayers* are very *Needful Prayers*. *Needful* on all Accounts! For we have in the Word of God, many *Precepts* for our *Ejaculatory Prayers* unto them.

It is the Commandment of the Infinite *Prayer-hearer*, in *Eph.* 6. 18. That we ſhould *Pray Always*. Now this cannot be done in all the Senſes of it, by *Praying* only twice or thrice in a Day. No, it becomes us very often in a Day, to take Flight into the *Mount*, by our *Ejaculations*, and ſo back again. To render this the more unqueſtionable, 'tis there added, *Pray with all Prayer and Supplication*; and *Ejaculations* are one Mode of *Praying*, which cannot be excluded out of the Injunction.

Is it not the Counſel of the Lord, in *Prov.* 3. 6. *In all thy Ways acknowledge God?* Now this urges for our being oftener with God, than when we do with *Set Speeches*, fall down on our *Knees* before him. Indeed, we cannot more ſignificantly *Acknowledge* the Omniſciency, and the Omni-preſence, as

well as the *Omnipotence* of God in *all our Ways*, than by being full of our *Ejaculations* unto him in *all our Ways.*

Is it not the Order of the Lord in *Phil.* 4. 6. *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thankſgiving, let your Requeſts be made known unto God?* Now, this can't be ſo fully obey'd, as it ſhould be, without one little *Glance* towards the other World, oftner than juſt when we *Kneel* before our God. It is into our *Ejaculations* that we are to put Thouſands of our *Prayers*, our *Supplications*, and our *Thankſgivings*,

And, in the Word of God, we have many *Patterns* for our *Ejaculatory Prayers* unto him.

Thoſe Eminent Men, whoſe Names are Embalmed and Recorded in the Oracles of God, for a *Remembrance to all Generations*, 'tis Reported of them, that they were *Praying Men*; and their *Ejaculatory Prayers* are particularly remembred in theſe Oracles. I may ſay with the Apoſtle, *The time would fail me to mention them.*

David,

David, among the reſt, ſeems to have been a rare Proficient in the Trade of *Ejaculatory Prayer*, when he ſays, in *Pſal.* 119. 164. *Seven times a Day do I praiſe thee, O Lord.* It can ſcarce be ſuppoſed, that this great Warriour had *ſeven* certain *Hours*, for *ſeven* large *Prayers* every Day: No, for *That*, what he ſaid elſewhere, was pretty well, *Evening, and Morning, and at Noon will I pray.* Much leſs are the *Seven* Canonical Houſs for Prayers in Popery countenanced here. It is enough that the Pſalmiſt could ſay, *Very often, and a good large number of times in a Day, do I take all Advantages to be looking up to the Lord.*

Add this one thing more. We have many *Wants*, many *Griefs*, many *Fears*, every Day, wherein our *Ejaculatory Prayers* would be of no ſmall Importance. Many *Good Things* we have every Day, to ſpecify unto the Lord our God: but if we ſtay till our leiſure for our more extended Prayers, either our *Memories* may fail, or our *Affections* may cool, and we may miſs of many

things that would have contributed to our Happineſs.

I had almoſt let fall one Curioſity farther; Namely, That the very ſhape of our *Bodies* might intimate, how pertinently *Ejaculatory Prayers* are, often in a Day, expected from us. *Os Homini ſublime dedit*,— Our erect Figure bids us *Look up!* as often as we can. And, *Anatomiſts* will tell you, That the *Eye* of Man has got a peculiar *Muſcle* belonging to it, above, and beyond the Eyes of other Animals; a *Muſcle* called, *Levator*, or, *A lifter up*. Why? We ſhould be often every Day, *Lifting up* the *Eyes* of our Souls, to the *everlaſting Hills*.

Secondly, *Ejaculatory Prayers* are very *eaſy Prayers*. Eaſy? Not to a Carnal, a Diſtempered, an Earthly-minded Heart, which will cry out of, *A Lion in the Way!* but unto a Soul truly *Rational*.

'Tis clear: *Ejaculatory Prayers* will hinder nothing that we have to do. There is an old ſaying, *That Prayer will hinder*

hinder no Journey; 'tis marvelously, and emphatically verified in *Ejaculatory Prayer*; no Buſineſs, in either of our Callings will go on a jot the worſe, for having this intermingled with it. *Ejaculatory Prayer* has been fitly compared unto *Varniſh*, that changes no *Colour* which it is laid upon, but puts a *Luſtre* and *Beauty* upon all. If there be any Work in the World, that requires the whole Man at once, 'tis *Fighting* in a Battel; yet, in 2 *Chron.* 13. 14. that in the midſt of an hot Battel, *they Cried unto the Lord*; no doubt, with *Ejaculatory Prayers*; and the *Fighting* went on the Better for it. The ſhooting of theſe *Arrows* hinder none of the other.

'Tis alſo clear; Nothing that we have to do, need hinder our *Ejaculatory Prayers*. Whatever *Honeſt Action* any one can be about, there may an *Ejaculatory Prayer* accompany it; and I wiſh you would ſuſpect the Honeſty of that Action, wherein ſuch an Addition may conſcientiouſly be Scrupled. A

Rabbi

Rabbi being asked by a Scholar, when it might be lawful for him to leave off ſtudying in the Laws of God; replied, *If you can find a Time that is really neither Day nor Night, do it.* So may I ſay concerning *Ejaculatory Prayer*, 'twill never be out of Time as long as it ſhall be either *Day* or *Night*. If any thing would interupt theſe Workings of our Souls, it might be when we are ſpeaking, in Company that muſt be very critically applied unto; yet *Nehemiah*, here, *Chap.* 2. 4. could Croud in his *Ejaculatory Prayers*, while he was in a Conference with the greateſt Perſon of *Aſia*.

Thirdly, *Ejaculatory Prayers* are very *uſeful Prayers*. *Uſeful*, as is your *Godlineſs*, whereof they are no little part; even, *for all things*.

A Man may procure manifold *Bleſſings* to *Himſelf*, by his *Ejaculatory Prayers*; even all ſorts of *Bleſſings*.

Ejaculatory Prayers do ſometimes iſſue in vaſt *Spiritual*, and *Eternal* Bleſſings, on the *Praying* Soul.

This

This I ſay, Let a Man be much in *Ejaculatory Prayers*, and he will become a very *Holy Man*. Such a Man will always be fit for all that Obedience, *Active* or *Paſſive*, which God calls him unto; ſuch a Man will evermore have his *Converſation in Heaven*; ſuch a Man will *grow in Grace*, and that *exceedingly*.

There is no Man, but what is often liable to thoſe *Inchantments* of the *Devils* upon his Mind, which will trepan him into thoſe things that he has afterwards cauſe to be ſorry for. Oh! but if we were perpetually ſhielding our ſelves with our *Ejaculatory Prayers*, the Devils would not find us to be ſo Obnoxious, and Acceſſable unto their fine *Inchantments*. Play much upon this *Harp*, and the *Evil Spirit* will not ſo much *Trouble* us.

Are none of you moleſted with ſore *Temptations*, and *Buffetings* of Satan? My Advice to you is, To Contradict ſtill every *Suggeſtion* of Satan, with ſome *Ejaculation* from your own Hearts, unto God, juſt contrary to that Suggeſtion. Thus you'll ſoon weary out the moſt *Buſie Adverſary!*

By *Ejaculatory Prayers* a Man may keep a *continual Feaſt*, yea, a *conſtant Heaven*, in his own Soul. Accuſtom your ſelves to

ſuch

ſuch *Prayers*, and you ſhall experimentally ſay, as in *Pſal.* 138. 3. *In the Day when I cry-ed, thou anſweredſt me*, O Lord, *and ſtrengthenedſt me with Strength in my Soul.* 'Tis a *Strong*, a lively, a thriving Soul, that is hereunto accuſtomed!

Again, *Ejaculatory Prayers*, do ſometimes iſſue in *Temporal Bleſſings* alſo.

If a Man be much in *Ejaculatory Prayers*, he takes the moſt compendious Courſe that can be, to ſee the Fulfilment of that Promiſe, *Whatſoever he doth, ſhall proſper.*

That *Iſraelitiſh* Champion, and Hero, *Sampſon*, in *Judg.* 15. 18. had his Life ſaved, in a deſperate Extremity, by one *Ejaculatory Prayer.*

That good Man Mr. *Blackerby*, once as he was walking in a Field, an horrible wild *Bull*, which had broken in thither, moſt furiouſly made up towards him; the good Man, being thus ready to be deſtroy'd, only ſent up this *Ejaculation* to the Lord, *Oh! my God, if I am in my way, ſtay the Fury of this Beaſt!* and he had no ſooner ſaid ſo, but the mad Beaſt preſently, and quietly went away, without offering the leaſt harm unto him.

Truly, Millions of *Injuries* and *Miſeries*, may be kept off, by *Ejaculatory Prayers.*

Yea,

Yea, by his *Ejaculatory Prayers*, a Man may procure *Bleſſings* for others alſo.

The Prophets of God, by thoſe *Darts*, have ſometimes dreadfully wounded, and killed thoſe whom they have ſhot them at. By an *Ejaculatory Prayer* [2 *Sam.* 15. 31.] *David* brought a miſchievous *Achitophel* to his deſerved Ruine. By an *Ejaculatory Prayer* [2 *King.* 2. 24.] once *Eliſha* cauſed the wretched Poſterity of ſome Wretches to be devoured. An *Ejaculation* of the expiring *Zachary*, was anſwered with a Vengeance many Ages after. That vile Jew, *Alexander*, doubtleſs, felt the direful Influence of the Apoſtolical *Ejaculation* [2 *Tim.* 4. 14.] *The Lord Reward him!* Theſe *Ejaculatory Imprecations*, 'tis not for us to Imitate.

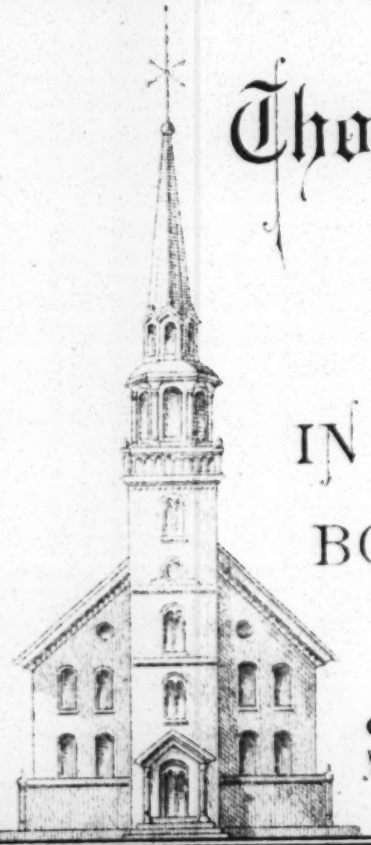
But *Ejaculatory Apprecations* have been efficacious. One of the moſt amazing Revolutions in the World was brought about, in anſwer to the *Ejaculatory Prayer* of *Nehemiah*. An *Heathen* Conqueror encouraged the *City*, and the *Temple* of God. While *Noah* was curſing of *Cham*, that Pious Patriarch [*Gen.* 9. 21.] ſpent one *Ejaculatory Prayer* for *Japhet*; and we poor Gentiles, are now reaping the *Fruit* of it. When *Stephen* was giving up the Ghoſt, that Pious Dea-

Deacon [*Act.* 7. 60.] ſpent one *Ejaculatory Prayer* upon his Perſecutors; and the Fruit of it was, the Converſion of the greateſt Converter that ever was, namely *Saul.* To have done;

Ejaculatory Prayers are of great Eſteem with God. When *Moſes* was in the *Red-Sea*, we read not that he ſpoke one Word in *Prayer*, yet the Lord ſaid, in *Exod.* 14. 15. *Moſes, wherefore crieſt thou unto me!* It ſeeing that the *Ejaculatory Prayers* of that Good Man, made a loud Cry in the Ears of the *Lord of Hoſts!*

Chriſtian, The *Laſt Prayer* that ever thou makeſt in the World, I ſuppoſe, will be an *Ejaculatory Prayer*: Thy *Laſt Breath*, if thou canſt, thou wilt make an *Ejaculation* of it. Oh! be now, a fore-hand, ſo Familiar with ſuch *Ejaculatory Prayers*, that, when thy Soul, going away with one of them, ſhall arrive at **Heaven**, thou may'ſt be able to ſay, *I have Hundreds of Thouſands of Times, by my Ejaculations been here already.*

FINIS.



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